The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

C. Willard Fetter:

UNFAVORABLE WINDS

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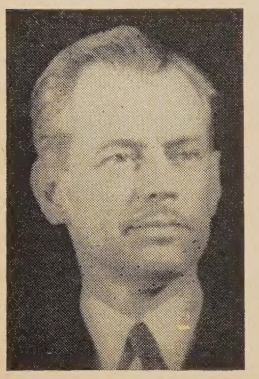
By John C. Irwin

SOME THOUGHTS ON

"THE weakest point in midcentury preaching is the inability of most preachers to prepare and deliver biblical expositions." So declares the managing editor of The Pulpit. Perhaps a recent experience of mine in church attendance will provide a footnote to that observation.



The preacher I heard on this particular Sunday announced as his sermon subject "The Art of Growing Older." The sermon revealed wide research, careful preparation, clear structure and convincing argument. In short, it was an excellent sermon, a credit to its creator and to the Christian ministry. However, after some well chosen paragraphs which introduced his theme and made contact with his audience, the preacher said: 'The text for our thought is a word from the 90th Psalm: 'So teach us to number our days, that we may give our hearts unto wisdom.' "

Moving into the body of his argument, the preacher declared that the Christian faith provides certain resources to aid us in growing older. Faith, he said, would help us (1) to accept the fact of change; (2) to face the future without worry; (3) to mature inwardly as we grow outwardly; and (4) to realize that increasing age brings compensations. Each of these assertions was illustrated and supported with helpful material. In concluding, the minister summarized, quoted from Browning and Markham, and said, "Thus, with the Psalmist, let us so number our days that we may give our hearts unto wisdom."

Now, I have described this sermon not to find fault with it as a *topical* sermon but simply to assert that it was *not biblical* and to raise the question whether this widespread habit of nailing a biblical text at the mast of a topical sermon may not explain the Pulpit editor's stricture on contemporary preaching.

We Need Topical Preaching

Let us be clear at once that there is no objection to topical preaching as such. Topical preaching is just as legitimate and valuable a sermonic form as bibilical exegesis. There are many topics that need Christian preaching, and there are some for which no text can be found without torturing the sense of Scripture. Even when a biblical basis might be found, there are times when logical analysis would be preferable to biblical exposition. Thus the point being raised is not whether topical preaching is justified but whether, once the topical form is decided upon, it would not be best to leave off the scripture "pretext."

There are several factors which should be considered. First, in this day it is certainly unnecessary to quote a Bible verse in order to be granted the right to speak. In an earlier time when every sermon was expected to expound Scripture, or when a proof text was expected to support every assertion, there may have been a reason for announcing a Bible verse to begin a sermon, even when it had only the most general connection with the matter that followed. However, as early as 1868 Professor Daniel Kidder in his classic *Treatise on Homiletics* wrote: "If the question be asked whether a text of Scripture is essential to a sermon, a negative answer may readily be given." He quoted Vinet with approval: "A sermon may be very biblical without a text, and with a text not biblical at all." Today there must be few congregations—at least among those whose pastors read The Pulpit—who demand a text as the price of listening to a sermon. Most laymen know that whether or not the sermon is religious and Christian is not established by the reading of a Bible portion at its beginning. And all preachers must know that a literary essay or political discussion may have a text at its beginning and still not be a sermon.

Homiletical Honesty

Again, there is often a measure of dishonesty in this prefixing of a text to a topical discourse. If we were frank, how many of us would have to admit that very often selection of a text is the last thing we do in our sermon preparation? We have a sermonic idea. It opens itself topically. We gather material, develop an outline, and do what-

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A seminary professor comments on our managing editor's evaluation of today's biblical preaching

BIBLICAL PREACHING

ever writing we do. Then we conclude, "Perhaps I ought to have a text." So with the sermon completed we reach for the concordance, scan the list of words related to our topic, look up a few references, and finally come upon a verse which is related in a general way to our theme. It was thus that my friend used the text in his sermon on growing older—a biblical parenthesis at the beginning and end of a topical sermon. When the topical form seems best, why not be frankly topical? Why try to make the congregation think we are opening to them the meaning of a Bible verse when we had decided upon everything we intended to say before selecting that verse?

Laymen and the Bible

In the third place, this use of a text is likely to obscure from the preacher the fact that he is not doing any serious exegetical or expository preaching. The fact that he goes through the ancient form of announcing a text makes many a preacher suppose he is preaching biblically when he is not. To my mind, the distinction between topical and biblical preaching is very simple. Both forms are alike in that they should deal with the contemporary needs of people and with Christian truth. They differ in their point of origin. The topical sermon takes its stand within life, develops its structure and content out of a logical analysis of its problem or theme, and in its course cites material from the Bible and from Christian history that will help people with the subject under discussion. The biblical sermon should start with a scripture verse or portion that the preacher has come to feel contains an important message for modern life. The structure and content of the sermon will grow like an organism from within that biblical insight and will open up its significance and relevance for the hearers. Let the reader examine his sermons for the past three months and judge honestly how many of them are topical with texts added. He will probably find that his proportion of real biblical preaching is not more than that stated by the Pulpit editorial—three out of a hundred.

Finally, the textual practice under discussion confuses the layman in his effort to understand the Scripture. His preacher tells him that the Bible is the Book of Life. He hears constant assertions that the Bible could solve his every problem. But when he opens his own Bible he finds much that is difficult and seemingly unrelated to his life. Then on Sunday he hears a text announced, but in the discussion that follows there is all too often no further reference to the verse, no treatment of it that would help him form his own method of getting help from his Bible. If he thinks critically at all, he must often wonder how the preacher derived what he said from the verse he was supposed to be explicating.

Midcentury preaching *does* need a rebirth of solid, honest biblical preaching. As one step toward getting it, let us stop "jacking up our topical sermons and running texts in under them."

Dwight E. Stevenson, whose survey on Disciple preaching appeared last month, has just published a 10-page brochure entitled, "A Guide to Expository Preaching." Built upon an outline format, it presents a step-by-step procedure for preparing expository sermons and is a worthy companion to Dr. Stevenson's "A Road-Map for Sermons" which appeared last year. Copies of either may be ordered at 25c each by writing directly to the treasurer, College of the Bible, Lexington, Kentucky.

God's Trumpet Call

Too often we are afraid to be first in anything. We are perfectly willing to follow along if someone else will lead, but for us to make the first move takes too much courage. I think this is the most serious criticism that can be used against a church and against Christians. We have become so timid that we let the market place set the pace. We are frightened to death to be pioneers as our fathers were, taking this gospel of ours into new relationships. We are frightened lest we make Jesus too relevant somewhere, and we hold back until others move and then timidly follow afar off. The word of God becomes a mere echo instead of a trumpet call. This is the thing we must fear. For when everything looks as if it is against us, then we must be willing to move first.—*Gerald Kennedy, Bishop, Methodist Church, Los Angeles, Calif., area, from an address delivered before the Chicago Sunday Evening Club.*

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The Man by the Side of the Road

By William G. Lorenz

And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half-dead. Luke 10:30.

A MAN was lying by the side of the road. He had been driving from Chicago to Indianapolis early in the evening and had picked up two hitchhikers. On a lonely stretch of the road, just after Route 52 separates from Route 41 and heads for Indianapolis, the hitchhikers stuck a gun into the side of the driver and made him stop the car. When he resisted he was thoroughly beaten and left by the side of the road as they sped away in his car.

The first person to come by was a rather well known Indianapolis minister. He had been in Chicago for a meeting of churchmen and was hurrying home. His headlights caught the outline of the man; but because his mind was on some weighty problem of church policy that had come up during the day, he automatically swung his car to the left side of the road and rolled past at a comfortable 65.

Next a prominent Christian layman came by. He saw the man in time to start slowing down; but when he came closer, he realized that the man by the side of the road was in pretty bad shape and would need a lot of care. Remembering that the reason for his going to Indianapolis in the evening was to get a good night's sleep so as to be fresh for his business conference in the morning, the layman swung wide and went by.

The third person to come by was a Negro truck driver. He stopped. After quickly setting up a flare behind his truck, he came to the man, got out his first-aid kit, and did all that he could to make him comfortable. Realizing that more had to be done, he got him into his truck, took him to the hospital in Lafayette, got in touch with the man's folks in Indianapolis, reported the loss of the car to the state police, and then went on his way. Who was a neighbor to the man by the side of the road?

Sometimes it helps us to see what Jesus was driving at when we take his stories out their Palestinian context of 1,900 years ago and place them in our 20th century world.

Am I a Good Neighbor?

Let's take a look at this story of the Good Samaritan. It was started off by the lawyer's question, "How shall I inherit eternal life?" And it is the lawyer, not Jesus, who answers his own question with the summation of all the law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Never think that it was Jesus who originated these so-called 11th and 12th commandments. This summation, made out of the union of Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, apparently was common knowledge to Jewish scholars at the time of Jesus.

And, as Kierkegaard pointed out, Jesus doesn't even answer the lawyer's question, "Who is my neighbor?": "Christ does not talk about knowing one's neighbor, but about one's self being a neighbor, as the Samaritan proved himself one by his compassion. For by his compassion he did not prove that the man attacked was his neighbor, but that he was the neighbor of the one who was assaulted." The parable still judges us today as it did the lawyer of old. When have I had compassion for the man by the side of the road?

The story of the Good Samaritan is focused on that one man out of three, who from a religious and racial standpoint could least have been expected to stop, but who did stop, bind up the man's wounds and do everything possible for his restoration to health. Jesus commanded that we should go and do likewise.

Barriers to Being Neighborly

But let us consider how difficult it is for us to do likewise when we meet the man by the side of the road. In the first place, we are so bound up in our own interests that no matter how much compassion we would like to have for our neighbor we just don't have the time to maintain a sustained interest in him. How often we have held back from helping a person or group that needed us! We knew that such a task might get us too involved, might take too much of our time and energy. And then again, how many times we have started out helping someone in need and then have not seen the job through to its completion. This

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WILLIAM G. LORENZ is the 1952 Seminarian Preacher of the Year. Selected by a national board of judges, his sermon was delivered before the Chicago Sunday Evening Club on May 25. A graduate of Princeton University and McCormick Theological Seminary, he is a fourth-generation minister and is now working with migrant families employed in the sugar beet industry near Crookston, Minn., where he is a staff member of the Home Missions division of the National Council of Churches. He has worked in social action projects of the church in Poland, Puerto Rico, Michigan and Chicago. The names and pictures of the top ten students in this annual selection appear on pages 16 and 17.

kind of experience is most unsatisfactory, both to the person being helped and to the person who wants to be compassionate.

The experience of Americans dealing with European displaced persons has been revealing. So many of the D.P.'s have come to this country full of thankfulness to their sponsors. And yet when they have come to know their sponsors face to face, with the instinct that comes from having been shoved from pillar to post, they find something phony in the American's kindness. This phoniness, usually traceable to the American's unwillingness to give wholly of himself, leaves many D.P.'s suspicious and sadly disillusioned.

We face another difficulty when we ask: "Is this person really worthy of my help?" When we ask this question about the worth of the individual, we go far toward destroying compassion. Neither the Negro truck driver nor the Samaritan asked this question about the individual he helped. The reason they had compassion on the man by the side of the road was that they were able to be of help to that man and they helped him. Finding out the worthiness of the individual is a subtle form of selfishness and ego-building. We don't want to give help to just anyone. We want to be of help to someone about whom we can boast in later days, "I helped that fellow once and look how far he has come since then." Possibly we may even want to be paid back. Just watch yourself the next time you are thinking about helping someone. See if you don't ask, first, "What kind of fellow is he?" and second, "Does he really need my help?" If God had been concerned with our worthiness instead of our need for his love, Christ never would have appeared on this earth.

Love for Individuals

A third factor keeping us from compassionate action is the same that caused the Indianapolis minister to swing around the man by the side of the road. It is highly probable that the weighty problem on the minister's mind was that of the church implementing its belief in serving humanity. It is so much easier to love mankind in general than it is to love a particular human being.

When one comes close to an individual person he is annoyed by a thousand little things. He sees sores and physical irregularities. He may even get a whiff of an unpleasant smell. In Dostoievsky's *The Brothers Karamazov,* the saintly Father Zossima quotes a man who had such troubles:

> The more I love man in general, the less I love him in the particular. In my dreams I have often come to making enthusiastic schemes for the service of humanity, and perhaps I might actually have faced crucifixion if it had been suddenly necessary; and yet I am incapable of living in the some room with anyone for two days together, as I know by experience. As soon as anyone is near me, his personality disturbs my self-complacency and restricts my freedom. In twenty-four hours I begin to hate the best of men: one because he is too long over his dinner, another because he has a cold and keeps on blowing his nose. I become hostile to people the moment they come close to me. But it always happens that the more I detest men individually, the more ardent becomes my love for humanity.

Not long ago there was an article in the *Saturday Evening Post* by a woman who is dismayed about the numerous appeals made to the "Good Samaritans" of our day by "good causes." There are appeals from the heart society, cancer research institute, the Red Cross, the community fund, and so on which the "Good Samaritan" of our time must decide between and evaluate. These are all good causes. But one must smile at the use of the term "Good Samaritan" for such kinds of impersonal love of humanity. How far we have got from the mind of Christ and the personal love of his Good Samaritan!

Ivory-Tower Existences

A fourth and final difficulty that we have in letting ourselves go in compassion for the man by the side of the road is that we never see him. We tend to live our own ivory-tower existences, never seeing any people except those around us who are on the same high level of economic prosperity as we are. How dull it is to help out someone who is in no greater need than we are! We go through life consciously or unconsciously avoiding the possibility of seeing the man by the side of the road.

There is an Episcopal clergyman who has spent his life among the poor and downtrodden of the slums. The wealthy churchmen of his denomination call him a "Red" because of his desire to have legislation passed which would ease the burden on the despairing people he ministers to. When asked about this name-calling and the feeling behind it, he had this to say: "I don't blame them. They've never seen how these people live, and naturally they don't understand. If they would only find out for themselves how bad the conditions are, they would probably do something about them—and stop calling me a communist." Most of us have to see the man, stripped and wounded by the side of the road, before we can be a neighbor to him.

Not only as individuals but as a Christian church we must see the man by the side of the road and come to his aid. Until the church realizes its neighborly responsibility, it defiles the part it should play as a member of the corporate body of Christ. The modern American church—our church —has settled back in introverted complacency, intent on solving its own problems and failing to see those in the community who have been robbed and beaten by thieves and left without a helping hand. And the church stands condemned by those who look at it critically because it does not follow out the teachings of its Founder. Just go down to Chicago's Bughouse Square some Saturday evening and listen to Johnny Carrol condemning the church. How? By reading from the Bible!

Today's Man by the Side of the Road

Wide-awake churchmen in Chicago should be aware of the man by the side of the road living in this city's slum areas. Many new people have come to Chicago because it has a large number of job opportunities. Yet Chicago lags behind the country's largest cities in percentage of new housing

built since the war. The result has been tremendous overcrowding in slum areas; four, five, and sometimes as high as ten people live in the space originally built for one person. Landlords are making huge profits from such a situation: the more people in a building, the larger the income. There seems to be good evidence that some real-estate interests—the very people who should be putting up more housing—are delaying building in order to continue to reap the high rents of the slums. Meanwhile the slum-dweller is left to suffer in overcrowded misery and filth. And the church seems to be passing by on the other side.

Last fall a Protestant minister accompanied representatives of some civic groups in a visit to the editor of the *Chicago Daily News* to see if his paper would not put more emphasis on the need for more public housing. He said to them: "I'm glad to see you here. Your project is a badly needed one. I'm glad to see that you have a Protestant minister with you. The Protestants are a powerful pressure group, but they never seem to get interested in projects like this." What an opportunity lies right here for the church to show its compassion for those distressed people of the slums!

America's Migrants

On a national scale, the man left robbed by the side of the road is literally the migrant farm worker. Robbed of a steady job by the 500,000 Mexican "wetbacks" who enter the United States illegally every year, he travels the highways and byways of the country looking for a job to earn money to feed and care for his often sickly family. He does an important job. He harvests 10 per cent of the food this country eats, mostly vegetables and fruits. And for his trouble he can only average $5 a day when he works, and he can only work an average of 100 days a year. Considering the high cost of transportation between jobs, the migrant and his family are literally robbed, robbed of a chance to live like human beings. But few people come to bind up his wounds as he lives in dirty tents and crowded shacks beside America's highways. The twenty leading Protestant denominations think so little of the migrants that they have provided a budget of only $30,000 for a ministry to America's one million migrants. Few people ever think of urging their state and national senators and congressmen to vote for legislation to establish minimum standards of wages and housing for migrants. These legislators are under powerful pressure from certain farm groups to leave things as they are so that seasonal farm labor will continue to be cheap. Migrants can't possibly organize as industrial labor has done to defend themselves against injustice. The church people of America must come to their aid if justice is to be done . . . but will we?

There are others today, beaten beside the road, both individuals and groups of people. You undoubtedly have been thinking about some of the others as I have been preaching. Each must be guided to the Inn where he can be restored. If we are to follow Christ to eternal life, then we must be there by the side of the road, ready to give in love what is so badly needed by the man lying there.

9-7-52

A Pastoral Prayer

By James Croswell Perkins

Pastor, Union Congregational Church
Phoenix, Arizona

ETERNAL Father of mercy, as we bow before thee this day may it be with thoughtful minds, devoted hearts and wills in tune with thy holy purposes of justice and love. We would come before thee humbly yet confidently in the name of the Christ who is our Savior, our Shepherd and our Friend. Turn our minds from every distracting care and interest that we may worship thee in spirit and in truth.

We praise thee for thy majesty and power shown in this great universe, and we thank thee for the many revelations of thy loving care for each one of us. Thou hast made gracious provision for the fulfillment of our every need. We offer our gratitude for every source of inspiration and comfort. For the helpfulness of friends and neighbors, for the loyal devotion of dear ones, for the light of thy holy Word, for the fellowship of the church and for the saving friendship of Christ, we magnify thy holy name.

We remember before thee those in need of special assurances of thy nearness and sheltering strength. Heal the wounds of any who have been hurt through the thoughtlessness of others. With sympathy we pray for those who are thwarted by poor health, for any who are baffled by keen disappointments, for those who are under special strain because of trying personal or family problems. With friendly understanding we would pray for any lonely folk who feel rejected and misunderstood. With earnestness we ask that the tempted may gain renewed power to be faithful to Christ. Help us to reach out in faith and appropriate those gifts of the Spirit that are available for every child of Thine—patience with those who provoke us, hopefulness when things look discouraging, persevering strength to bear up under the pressure of tiresome duties and responsibilities, the gentleness that makes for greatness and the love that never fails.

Help us to take a more vigorous, active share in the tasks of this congregation. Give us a new vision of the work of thy Church Universal. Grant still greater strength to those who work to build bridges of understanding and neighborliness in areas of ignorance and prejudice. Bless mightily all who try to advance peace and good will among the people of the earth. Through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and our Lord. Amen.

By R. Edward Dowdy

Christian Labor Relations

One is your Master and all ye are brethren. Matthew 23:8.

ONE of the most interesting developments within the churches in recent years is the growing concern about Christian labor relations. You will be interested to know that the initiative for this new concern came from organized labor itself. In 1909 the American Federation of Labor sent to the Federal Council of Churches a resolution suggesting that the Sunday before Labor Day be designated as Labor Sunday. For more than 40 years, this first Sunday in September has been so designated. But the last five or six years have been marked by an increasing concern on the part of the churches.

Six years ago on this first Sunday in September, I cautiously announced that I would speak on "Christian Labor Relations." Being totally ignorant of the subject I spent more time in preparation of that sermon than usual. I discovered that there was a library in the National Labor Relations Board headquarters and that I could make use of it. The librarian was a little skeptical of my interest, for apparently a minister in the library of the National Labor Relations Board was something of a novelty. I must confess that I felt a little out of place myself until I found on the shelf a familiar volume—the Holy Bible. It was not in a compartment marked "Religion," nor was it bound in fancy black leather. There it was, on a shelf with other books, marked with its catalogue number and standing on its own merits. To be sure I was pleased, but I was even more delighted when I discovered that the volume next to it bore the title, *History of the American Working Class.*

Rise of Democracy

From that day on, I have had a larger appreciation of the place that the church ought to play in the labor movement. I remember that Jesus grew up in a carpenter's shop in Nazareth, that he chose as his disciples a group of fishermen from the Lake of Galilee, and that his most influential first century followers was Paul who earned his own way on his missionary tours by making tents.

R. EDWARD DOWDY is the associate minister of First Baptist Church, Washington, D.C., which has just observed its 150th anniversary. A graduate of Colgate Rochester Divinity School, he held a five-year pastorate at Hollins College, Va., before coming to his present position seven years ago. His sermon was preached last Labor Sunday.

Historically the same spiritual drive that gave rise to the strong Protestant church caused the trade union movement to germinate in England. In both cases, it was a genuine concern for individual men and women and their children that produced on one hand the democratic Protestant church organization and on the other the trade union. In many cases in England it was the Methodist lay preacher who was the labor leader. He was a preacher on Sunday, but on Monday he was back in the pits digging coal or in the mill tending a loom.

It is unfortunate that the church did not remain closer to the center of the developing labor movement a century ago. Much of the violence and industrial warfare that have been so typical of labor's struggle might then have been avoided. The church as such has had almost no place in the important decisions of the past 75 years of industrial relations. Many believed that the church had no place in the rough-and-tumble of these relations, which from time to time became open warfare between owners and workers.

It is my conviction that the church made a serious error by staying on the sidelines while human beings fought like savages to secure tolerable working conditions, decent wages and reasonable security. I feel sure that more of Christian idealism in the labor movement would have meant less bloodshed and suffering.

Little wonder that labor generally has been in doubt as to what the Christian message meant in the area of labor's interest. Charles P. Taft, an outstanding Christian layman, said several years ago: "The church has done its job and does it increasingly well, in serving humans who face the problems of birth and death and sickness and sorrow, who struggle with their children and their family relations and worry over the daily troubles of existence, but in meeting the problems laymen face in responsible leadership of their communities in business and politics and labor and agriculture, the church has missed the boat entirely."

A New Emphasis

That statement may have been true several years ago, but I challenge it today. All across the land, thousands upon thousands of American preachers are seeking on this day to point the everlasting gospel toward the working man in America. Last night the *Evening Star* listed ser-

mon topics for 150 churches and in 49 the message for today was focused toward labor relations.

As a result of that sermon I was invited to speak to a national convention of utility workers, a C.I.O. organization. The important thing is not that *I* was invited, but that *any* minister was invited. To my great delight and, I must confess, amazement, I discovered from their printed minutes that at each such convention, the meeting was begun with prayer followed by a brief message from a local minister. The same procedure closed the convention. This was not a church-sponsored meeting; it was a national convention of a large C.I.O. union. On another occasion, I was invited to speak at an early morning session of a training school being held by a labor union. It was a school to train in labor procedures. But on Sunday morning, they wanted a minister for a 6 a.m. service.

The door is wide open for Christian leadership in the field of labor relations. I see no reason for the continuing unrest that so often disrupts the life of a community, and at times the life of the whole nation. The solution lies in bringing the Christian gospel to bear on the problems of labor. The warfare between labor and management must cease if we are to have domestic harmony.

All Men Are Brothers

We have learned by hard experience that labor is more than a commodity. It is not to be purchased as a manufacturer would purchase some other raw material. The Christian point of view will always insist that a man is different from so many units of electricity or so many tons of coal. He is a person, made in the image of God, potentially a son of God through Christ. As such he is the equal of every other human being, regardless of race or color or language or the kind of job he does. As professing Christians, we have often sinned here, for despite our democratic protestations we very easily divide people into classes and categories.

It may be that the root of so much labor misunderstanding lies at this point. It is difficult to determine fairly the wage to be paid to men of differing skills in the production of a complicated machine like an automobile. But I am convinced that it would be infinitely easier if we started with the premise that all these other workers, from coal mine and foundry to assembly plant, are my brothers rather than my enemies or potential competitors.

A second Christian conviction that I have is this: Organized labor has certain rights, but it also has certain obligations. Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. That is true in the labor-management field. A hundred years ago, before the rise of labor unions, the laboring man was completely at the mercy of the employer. If the employer required that he work 12 or 14 hours, he had no alternative but to work 12 or 14 hours. The selfish employer could pay as little as possible, work the men as long as possible, without concern for the workers.

Today we are in danger of swinging to the other extreme. Labor, by long and difficult struggle, has been recognized, hours have been reduced to a reasonable 40-hour week, wages increased by collective bargaining. The great temptation of organized labor today is to continue to seek power. A few years ago strikes were precipitated by an effort to reduce the working day or increase pay to a living wage. Today more and more strikes are about so-called jurisdictional disputes—which union is to have power over certain matters, or seniority status, or who determines employment, the union or the management. In Christian kindness, I warn that labor organizations can become just as ruthless as the selfish old-time capitalist. A touch of Christianity would help both.

Titles and Texts

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

BERT WRIGHT, Salem Methodist, Halifax, England. "The Perplexing Christ." John 10:24—*How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ tell us plainly.*

GILBERT H. CURRY, East Columbus Methodist, Columbus, Ind. "Our Senior Citizens." II Sam. 19:32—*Now Barzillai was a very aged man.*

NORMAN DONALD NEWMAN, College Methodist, Cedarville, Ohio. "The Point of No Return." Luke 9:51—*And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.*

HAROLD C. DEWINDT, West-Park Presbyterian, New York, N. Y. "Nothing but the Best." Matt. 5:48—*Be ye therefore perfect.*

HARRY C. KUHNERT, Congregational, Nekoosa, Wis. "Keeping in Step with Christ." Luke 24:14 (Moffatt)—*Jesus himself approached and walked beside them.*

WILLIAM J. DELANEY, Leesburg, Ohio, "Rejected Prophet." Matt. 13:57—*A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house.*

L. W. HAUTER, First Presbyterian, Oelwein, Iowa. "God and Security." Deut. 33:27—*Underneath are the everlasting arms.*

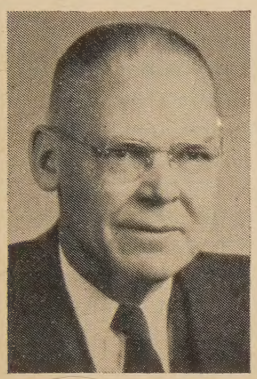
W. RALPH WARD, JR., Mt. Lebanon, Methodist, Pittsburgh, Pa. "Falling Prey to Teachings We Abhor." Judg. 2:3—*And their gods shall be a snare unto you.*

The Protestant Church and Labor

By Willard C. Mellin

How is it that ye know not how to interpret this time? Luke 12:56.

ON this Labor Sunday Jesus is asking the question in our text of the Protestant churches. For the church has failed to understand the significance of the organized labor movement. It is my purpose to give an interpretation of the relation between the Protestant church and labor in the contemporary American scene. Strange as it may seem, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., since the days of Charles Stelzle and Theodore Roosevelt, has been in the forefront in its official interpretations of the Christian relation between the church and labor. It is an interesting recollection that "a group of men from Pittsburgh" put an end to Charles Stelzle's work under denominational sponsorship. Now the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. is determined to recover lost ground.



For the past five years, from among the 8,000 Presbyterian pastors, seminar groups of 20 have been regularly selected to study for a period of three and a half weeks at the institute of industrial relations at the Presbyterian Labor Temple in New York city. Some 600 pastors have received this special orientation course in industrial relations under the auspices of the Board of National Missions.

America's frontier is no longer in the "wild west" but in the wild industrial and commercial cities, which have become the controlling centers of our culture. In 1800, when our nation was newly established, 97 per cent of the population were farmers. Today only 17 per cent are farmers. Today only 10 per cent of our families are in the management group while 33 per cent are in the organized labor group. The dominant religious group in our 65 great cities is Roman Catholic—if not in number, certainly in influence and control, because of the efficient organization and steadily pursued policy of the Roman church. When our Constitution was adopted and until after the Civil War, the population of America was overwhelmingly Protestant, Anglo-Saxon, rural, and individualistic. Can you believe that in 1870 every Pullman parlor car had as standard equipment a reed organ and a set of hymnbooks for public worship of God?

A Rapidly Changing World

There has been a greater change in the circumstances of American daily life since 1875 than from the days of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob up to 1875. A single dynamo at the Niagara Falls power plant produces more energy than all of Egypt produced in Bible times. In the decade from 1870 to 1880 or thereabouts the following discoveries and developments took place which produced our modern industrial society: the Standard Oil company was organized in 1875 (oil was discovered in 1859); the Swift people introduced meat packing and transportation by refrigeration car in 1875; the electric dynamo was invented in 1882, the arc-lamp in 1878, the telephone in 1876, the Selden gas engine in 1879; the Bessemer process for making steel was introduced in America in 1871; and the industrialization of agriculture began in the decade. Today the growing, processing, and distribution of food is the greatest of all our industries. In 1900 Knudsen introduced the mass production assembly line and the Morgans organized the U. S. Steel corporation. Importation of cheap immigrant labor from Europe went on continuously from 1840 to 1920. Five million came from southern Europe in the single year 1907—comparable to the demobilization of the U. S. troops following the Second World War. Twenty per cent of our population changed its place of residence last year.

Human Relations

This shifting and uprooting of the people sets a tremendous problem for religion. Today the Protestant church is localized in the rural, Anglo-American, and diminishing middle-class group. If this trend continues, Protestantism will exclude and suffocate itself.

So-called "free enterprise" is no longer characteristic of the American industrial scene, however useful the phrase is at election time. Today 87 per cent of our workers are employed in mass production enterprises and our economic life is controlled by a few giant corporations. So we have mass unemployment, the National Industrial Re-

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covery act, giant unions, antitrust laws, the Taft-Hartley act and Social Security in an endeavor to cope with this new nonmoral, secular, industrial order.

Nothing human dare be foreign to the church's interest. The great trouble in our secular society today is in the realm of human relations. Because we fail in this field, we have strikes and lockouts and great waste of human capacities. What happens to men, women, and children must become the greatest concern of the church of Jesus Christ. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," says Jesus.

We can be encouraged by the increasing stream of pastors studying in the seminar at the Presbyterian institute of industrial relations in New York city. Institute lecturers are men of varied backgrounds, such as Mark Starr of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union, Warren J. Taussig of the National Association of Manufacturers, and Liston Pope, dean of the Yale Divinity School. The intense schedule includes field trips, lectures and individual study. Field trips take the pastors to the East Harlem Protestant Mission in an area where 300,000 people are crowded into one square mile; the Ford Assembly plant at Edgewater, New Jersey; the Sunshine Biscuit company baking plant on Long Island; the United Nations; the American Type Foundry and Press Builders of Elizabeth, New Jersey; the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists in New York city; the New York state F.E.P.C. office; the Federal Mediation Board office; the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.; the United Auto Workers, C. I. O.; and the slum clearance housing projects such as Cooper Village, Stuyvesant Town and other housing centers.

Another development in this field is the "laboring seminarian." Last summer thirty-two theological students from various seminaries spent three months studying the contemporary industrial scene under the direction of Marshall L. Scott, dean of the Presbyterian institute of industrial relations. All the students in these ventures work (incognite) in mass production industrial enterprises throughout the entire period. They hold three evening seminars weekly and give volunteer service in the inner-city churches on Sunday. In the presbytery of Pittsburgh, the spirit of Jesus Christ has experienced a resurrection in the recent establishment of a council on industrial and interracial work.

In a private discussion concerning the disintegration of the family unit with the industrial revolution and its effect on the individual psychodynamically, the professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins medical school said that in his opinion the future of the individual in America would be integrated, not around the church as in the past, but around the labor unions. It is my own experience as a pastor that the local union of the United Mine Workers is more effectively associated with its members' families in the crisis of death than the session of the church is with *its* families in a similar crisis. The United Mine Workers are literally "there with banners" with substantial help for the widow and orphans.

On this Sunday before Labor Day let us remember that the hands of our Divine Redeemer are the calloused hands of the Carpenter of Nazareth. And let his Church ponder deeply his stinging question: "How is it that ye know not how to interpret this time?"

THE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

A Children's Sermon by Harold L. Lunger

A TAXICAB driver told this story to a friend of mine. One summer in a boys' camp where the cab driver serves as counselor, there was an eight-year-old by the name of Jim. He was small for his age and backward. He could not keep up with the other fellows on most games and sports. He could not tie knots as well, could not swim as far, could not row as fast. The others often teased him for being so little and so slow.

Jim was not like most boys. When he was teased he did not get mad and fight. Instead he just chuckled with the rest, shrugged it off, and kept on trying to do better all the time.

One day an interesting thing happened. A larger boy by the name of Pete—a kind of bully—came up to Jim and began razzing him about something. The eight-year-old just grinned and smiled back. That made the older fellow mad. He clenched his fists and got all ready to fight.

What do you suppose Jim did then? He threw out his arms, grabbed the older boy's fists, and held on tightly. "So you want to dance," he said. "All right, let's dance." And with that he began dancing and jumping around, dragging Pete with him. It was all so funny to the other boys standing about that they burst out laughing. Finally even Pete had to grin and laugh at himself. Then it was all over.

The campers had thought Jim was not very bright. Now they began to see that in getting along with others he was smarter than most of them.

The biggest job for us in today's world is learning how to live with other people without getting mad and getting into fights. It is too bad that not all of us are as wise as Jim. If only nations were as bright as he! For Jim had learned the meaning of the verse: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

By Stanley I. Stuber

'And Light Is Good'

You are the light of the world. Matthew 5:14.

OUT of her experience as tutor to Japan's imperial heir, Elizabeth Gray Vining has written a book, *Windows for the Crown Prince.* All of us are interested in Miss Vining. Many of you know her personally. You know of her quiet, simple inner Quaker faith, and some of her experiences as a special teacher in the imperial household. In this book you will probably learn many new lessons both about the crown prince and about the imperial family. But greater than any of these lessons will be the realization that here is a Christian author who is able to open windows for herself and others. As the reviewer in the *Nippon Times* said, "Mrs. Vining opened windows on the Western world and on life itself."

After indicating that many new windows were opened for the crown prince, she says that, in turn, many windows were opened to her, "and perhaps through me for others . . . both on Japan itself and on that ancient, ceremonious hidden world within the Moat." "Through windows, whichever way they face, comes light, and light is good," she adds. Yes, light is good.

Since being in Japan for these few weeks, participating in the dedication of the International Christian University, visiting many cities and speaking at schools and universities, getting caught in the very middle of the May Day riots, and sitting in while the lower house debated and passed the Subversive Activities Prevention Act, I feel, as I have felt in Europe and in America, that we are living in a very dark world. In spite of all our modern improvements, our mass communications, our arts and sciences, I am convinced that the people as a whole, even nations, live in moral and spiritual darkness.

Oh, we have enlightenment for the mind. We have all kinds of entertainment and we have many sorts of modern lighting. On the physical level we pride ourselves on beautiful picture windows. But morally and spiritually most people live in a dreadful, fearful darkness. It is the type of darkness which covered the earth at the time of the Roman empire and which runs throughout the book of Revelation.

What Can We Do?

Not only is there in this world untold suffering on the part of the poor, of homeless and displaced persons, but also the sins of worshiping the almighty dollar, of power gone wild and paganism in high places. It all spells darkness. In a spirit of futility many say, Well, after all, what can we do about it?

I believe there is a great deal which we, as Christians, can do about the present world situation. We can change for the better nations as well as people. We must never forget that the Great Commission reads, "Go ye therefore, and teach all *nations,* baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

For some reason Protestants have misinterpreted the Great Commission. Unlike the Catholics, they have concentrated on individuals, upon souls, and let the nations go their own pagan way. Social and economic affairs, capital and labor, war and peace have been very largely outside the scope of Protestant thinking and activity. Our missionary emphasis has been largely upon education and evangelism—the winning of the individual to Christ.

Now, all this is good and necessary. But I believe the time has come—and it has been forced upon us by the zeal of Communism—when Protestants will have to rethink and relive the social message of the New Testament. Protestants are now called upon to open new windows in a dark world and let the light of social justice, the light of brotherhood, the light of peace shine forth.

Opening New Windows

Let us begin with Jesus. Start with the Sermon on the Mount. Note how practical it is. Christ demanded Christian action—doers of the word. It is no wonder that when the Master opened up new spiritual windows, in the Sermon on the Mount and in the parables, the people were astonished. They still are!

Take Peter. For a long time Peter had lived

STANLEY I. STUBER preached this sermon at the Tokyo Union Church during a recent trip to Japan when, as the executive secretary of the Japan International Christian University Foundation, he participated in the dedication of I.C.U. A graduate of Bates College and Colgate Rochester Theological Seminary, he is widely known through his ecumenical leadership in the relief and public relations fields. The author of seven volumes, his latest, The Christian Reader, *is this month's selection of the Religious Book of the Month Club. He is an associate editor of the* 20th Century Quarterly, *religious educational publication of the Christian Century Foundation.*

in the darkness of Judaism. Then one day a window was opened to him and he saw, for the first time, that Gentiles were worthy enough to receive the saving gospel of Christ.

Or take Paul. After the window of heaven had been opened to him on the Damascus Road and the light of truth began to pour into his soul, he began his great ministry by organizing, with Barnabas, a world relief movement. No one can truly read his letters without becoming aware of Paul's concern with daily life, with all that has to do with the whole man.

The point I am making is that in this dark world we are commissioned, according to the New Testament, to open windows not only for the souls of men but also for the world in which they live.

Some day, and I hope it will be soon, the organized Christian church is going to be forced to look at the words of Christ, as found in Matthew 25, with realism. For Christ is asking the church today, "What are you doing for the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison?"

A Brighter Outlook

Yes, light is good. That is why we must, as Christians, be realistic and open windows which will bring light, fresh air, a brighter outlook to the mass of the people. There are many windows through which understanding, brotherhood, peace may shine forth. We can mention only a few.

At San Francisco, when the United Nations was established, I witnessed the opening of a window. During the years since, at Lake Success and Paris, I have seen light shine forth in the darkness. The U. N. is only a window, but it does let in the light. I believe we should do our utmost to keep it open. And I hope that Japan may soon have a share in doing so.

At Mexico City I saw another window opened —UNESCO, an organization to serve as a window so that the light of world peace may lodge in the minds of men. I believe it is good and deserves our support.

At Amsterdam I helped open another window—the World Council of Churches. I believe it is good. It brings us closer together. It creates understanding. If we keep this window open it will bring light down even into our local congregations and make us realize that we are all bretheren.

Now we are opening still another window—the International Christian University of Japan. It is a window through which the light of truth will shine. For it is to be an educational institution of the very highest order. But I hope it will be even more. I hope it will open windows and let the full, complete gospel of Christ shine forth. I hope it will become a demonstration center for all that is good and true and beautiful. I hope it will create an entirely new pattern, a new blending, of a warm, deep spiritual religion with the social and moral concerns of Christ.

It is my hope that this university will cooperate closely with the church and be a part of it, yet at the same time challenge it constantly with new vision, new plans, new paths of service and new horizons.

The Light of the World

Yes, indeed, light is good and Jesus had a lot to say about it. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Yes, good works are windows through which the love of Christ can shine.

A few years ago I took a journey to Assisi, the little town in Italy where St. Francis lived his wonderful life. The thing which impressed me about Assisi was not the great churches built in honor of St. Francis, not the relics on his tomb, nor even the tree where he preached to the birds, but his lingering spirit, which seemed like a window to heaven. And as I walked the streets and hillsides where he preached his sermons of kind deeds, I took courage, and looked up, and saw that victory is on the side of Christ.

It is a wonderful thing to be in the presence of a saint. So many windows to God are thereby opened. The New Testament becomes a living book. The church becomes a creative Christian fellowship. Prayer becomes a channel of communication with God. The Kingdom of God becomes a reality. And through these spiritual windows salvation, a Christian community, social justice and world peace take on an imperative nature. Yes, it is a wonderful thing to stand in the presence of a saint and look through spiritual windows!

Build Larger Windows

A few weeks ago, in New York city, we had the privilege of seeing George Bernard Shaw's *St. Joan of Arc*. It was a great experience. Here was a saint in her own right. Here was one who had a fresh vision of God and could hear voices from heaven. Yet the church could not understand her —and probably never will. But Joan of Arc opened windows toward God and let the light go back and forth until new spiritual insights were established which will outlast the ages. Her life reminded me of Dr. Fosdick's definition of a saint: a person through whom the light shines.

Light is not only good; it is absolutely essential to our spiritual well-being. So if we have dark souls, let us do as the missionary at Himeji did—build larger windows in order to let in the light, the fresh air and the beauty of God's presence. And if we really want to carry out Christ's great commission in all its fullness, let us do as Walter Rauschenbusch did—open up a new window into the New Testament and let its teachings shine forth on a dark world.

Spiritual windows are all about us, waiting to be opened. But we have to make the effort to open them. Some are stuck with ignorance. Some

are locked with superstition. Some are jammed with the blindness of sectarianism. Some are covered by curtains of nationalism. And some are bolted because of the fear of communism.

Nevertheless, we as Christians are commissioned to open these windows and let in the light of the Spirit of Truth. What greater task could possibly be assigned to us?

"Through windows, whichever way they face, comes light and light is good."

The Divine Shoemaker

By Bert Wright

Thy shoes shall be of iron and brass; and as thy days so shall thy strength be. Deuteronomy 33:25.

PASSING along the main street of a market town I saw a notice in a shoemaker's shop window which read: "We make shoes specially for this District." I crossed to see what type of footwear was indicated and found them to be shepherd's shoes. They were strongly made and had steel plates across the welts to give them durability when climbing the fell sides.

That incident spoke to me of God as the Divine Shoemaker of the world. The text leaped afresh to my mind: "Thy shoes shall be of iron and brass; and as thy days so shall thy strength be". That promise made to the sons of Asher, dwellers in a hilly district, is timeless in its application to the needs of men. The shoemaker is always adapting shoes for those whose way of life is along the hard roads.

A friend tells, with horror in his voice, that he had never realized how essential shoes were until, as a prisoner of war, he had bartered his shoes away for a few biscuits. The Negro sings of the great joy which will be his when he can walk around God's heaven in shoes. Throughout the ages symbolism has been associated with shoes. To cast a shoe over land meant ownership; shoes were used to denote life's pilgrimage; they were associated with rank, as emphasized by Jesus in the story of the lost son who returned and found shoes for his feet. In war days the best of material was utilized for the footwear of the army. "Every critical battle," said a famous general, "has been won by soldiers' boots."

Rough places are everywhere. Paul wore God's shoes from the beginning of his ministry to the end. Most of us know ambitions unrealized. God assures us that we can know a spirit of quietness in an unquiet world. We are apt to question the wisdom of God in letting us live in a world where there are so many things making for heartbreak and frustration. But surely God knows the kind of world that is best for us to develop our moral and spiritual capacities.

God's Shoes

Today things are disquieting, dismaying, discouraging, but experience indicates that God is still in his world and that he will fashion footwear suitable to the needs of our times. In that faith we never need lose heart and may face life's inevitabilities with assured poise. Truly, "the Almighty has his own purpose."

Our response to the challenge of the difficult places determines both our destination and our destiny. It is quite obvious that if we would possess the life abundant we must possess the adventurous spirit which aspires to climb "Hill Difficulty." Paul found that Damascus was the road of awakening, where he discovered what adjustments he had to make to live the victorious life. Sometimes the road of sacrifice looms ahead, and that when it cuts across our dearest hopes is most discouraging. Often it may be the road of frustration, and some great dream crashes before the impact of physical affliction. For some the road may be the one of misunderstanding, as they endeavor to offer their life to the service of Jesus Christ. For others the road may be that of severe temptation, and in loneliness the battle has to be won or lost. The battle is ours but God is in it with us. To the lonely fighter he says, "Lo, I am with you even unto the end of the world." To the hopeless fighter he says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Trust God to equip you and he will. Too many recall Gissing's words, "Man is a querulous creature with a fondness for nursing his miseries," and so they sit down and forget the promise of God: "Thy shoes shall be of iron and brass; and as thy days so shall thy strength be."

God fashions our shoes out of the material we furnish. Never will I forget a visit I once made to

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a boot factory. Shoes possess romance. The art of the designer, the intricacy of the machines, the work of the leather tanner and of the craftsman at the bench—these all combined produce shoes for comfort and pleasure. Shoes are produced for all uses from hiking to dancing.

Life's Hard Road

God fashions our shoes by the material of our prayers. St. Paul prayed for the thorn to be removed from his life that he might serve God better. God left the thorn but gave him greater equipment. Our Master, Jesus, set his face like a flint to go to Jerusalem and walked into the Garden of Gethsemane, on down to the judgment hall, and up to the hill of Golgotha bearing his cross, wearing God's special shoes. Most of our prayers to God deal with requests that he should remove the hard places, but so often to our dismay we find them remaining. Yet greater equipment comes into our lives and with courage we go ahead hopefully, realizing that God's shoes are never misfits.

Wearing God's shoes enables us to turn a minus into a plus. Read for inspiration Milton on his blindness; R. L. Stevenson on his tuberculosis; the amazing letters of Scott of the Antarctic, written while death stared him and his companions in the face; *The Christ of the Indian Road,* where Stanley Jones tells how he took a fresh grip upon life. So often the spirit of adventure is deadened by what are wrongly termed the "hard facts of life." Don't be afraid of the shoes God offers. The novel *Quo Vadis?* ends with a picture of Peter trying to run away because God's shoes were hurting his feet, but when he meets Jesus he puts them on again and retraces his steps. Tempted to shirk our responsibilities to God, let us discern Jesus sharing with us life's hard road.

I gave this text to a man who was desperately ill and had lost hope. We repeated together the words, "God will give me shoes of iron and shoes of brass to climb back to usefulness again." Years later, revisiting the city, I met the gentleman and asked how his health was. He replied, "Can't you see the rust coming through my shoes?" Seeing my perplexity he said, "Have you forgotten the shoes of iron and brass that you said God would give me?" I turned away with eyes brimming with tears, and thanked God for his part in our days as the Divine Shoemaker.

Listen again to the old promise. Let God make it true for you: "Thy shoes shall be of iron and brass; and as thy days so shall thy strength be."

Unfavorable Winds

By C. Willard Fetter

. . . and when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven. Acts 27:15.

EVER since men first went down to the sea in ships and returned with tales of the mighty deep, almost everyone has enjoyed a good sea yarn. The account in Acts of Paul's journey to Rome is one of the finest sea tales in literature. Written in the first person by a companion of the apostle, it has a note of authenticity. It depicts danger, fear, faith and rescue; it has suspense and thrills. Above all it reveals the protection of God.

Arrested for his Christian activities, Paul appealed to Caesar. That meant a long sea voyage to Rome for trial. With other prisoners he was placed in the custody of Julius, a Roman centurion, who put his charges on a ship calling at various ports on the coast of Asia Minor. Encountering unfavorable winds they sailed between the island of Cyprus and the mainland and finally put into harbor at Myra.

Since the ship was going on north, Julius transferred his prisoners to another vessel, bound for Italy with a cargo of grain and passengers. Progress was slow because of bad winds, but finally they entered the harbor at Fair Havens on Crete.

It was already late in the autumn, and by the time they were able to sail again it was late October. Knowing that shipping was virtually at a standstill in the winter months, Paul advised the ship's officers to remain in Fair Havens for the season. The skipper talked to the owner, who was aboard, and discovered that he wanted to sail on. So they set sail with the next good wind, thinking they could at least get to a port at the other end of Crete where there was a safer harbor.

The good wind proved to be only a "weather breeder" and soon a great northeaster blew up. All they could do was give way to the wind until driven under the shelter of a small island. Here they attempted to strengthen the vessel and brought the

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small lifeboat, which they had been towing, aboard. Fearing sandbars they took in all the sail they could. Still they tossed. They lightened the boat by casting off cargo. For several days they were unable to determine their position, seeing neither sun nor stars. All became despondent. Even the sailors lost their desire for food.

A Note of Hope

Then Paul injected a note of hope. He did say, "I told you so." That was only human. He added, "Take heart; for there will be no loss of life among you, but only the ship. For this very night there stood by me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and lo, God has granted you all those who sail with you.' So take heart, men."

At the end of two weeks of storm the lookout detected signs of land at midnight. Soundings were made which showed them to be in shallow water. Fearing rocks they anchored the ship at the stern. Then the sailors let out the lifeboat, and under pretense of fixing forward anchors, planned to escape. Seeing their attempt, the soldiers cut away the life boat, forcing the sailors to remain with the ship.

As day broke they attempted to land the ship, but she ran onto a sandbar and was wrecked by the waves. The soldiers were about to shoot their prisoners, lest they escape; but the centurion, who had become quite fond of Paul, forbade them. He ordered all who could swim to throw themselves overboard. Then the others, on planks and pieces of the ship, floated safely to the shore.

The land was the island of Malta, where they wintered. But that's another yarn.

Unfavorable Winds Come to All

Whether on the Mediterranean or the sea of life, no one has smooth sailing always. Unfavorable winds are a familiar experience.

Youth sets sail on smooth seas, full of hope and adventure-bound, all sails unfurled. Then an ill wind blows up—a crippling disease, a notice for induction, an unfaithful friend. That's life.

A young couple sets sail on the sea of matrimony with all the splendor of a June day about them, and with the words of Browning in their hearts:

> The year's at the spring,
> The day's at the morn;
> Morning's at seven;
> The hillside's dew-pearled;
> The lark's on the wing;
> The snail's on the thorn:
> God's in his heaven —
> All's right with the world.

But soon they discover there is something more to marriage. There is unemployment, or in-law trouble, or a sick child, or the separation of military life—ill winds all.

The businessman sets up shop with high ideals and sure of success. But he discovers that some competitors are ruthless, some goods he buys shoddy, some customers dishonest. Or shortages develop, or the market goes black. At no point in life is one safe from the storms until the final haven is reached.

We are sorry for the storms, but would we want a world where there was no possibility of storm? In "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" Coleridge pictures a ship on a suddenly becalmed sea:

> Day after day, day after day,
> We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
> As idle as a painted ship
> Upon a painted ocean.

There, unable to move without a breeze, unable to drink without rain, unable to talk because of parched tongues, the mariners wished and prayed for a storm.

Life Includes Storms

If we had to choose between absolute calm and storms, most of us would take the storms. Certainly this much is certain: if we want breezes to send us forward, we must risk the storms. Success is won only at the risk of failure. Happiness involves the chance of losing it. If we want to make any significant contribution to the betterment of life, we must risk being misunderstood, even crucified.

Christians especially dare not ask for a safe harbor. The old song "I've anchored my soul in the Haven of Rest" misses the point. Jesus said, "Launch out into the deep."

There is no use fighting the winds. If good winds do not blow we must use whatever winds we have. That is what the ship on which Paul sailed had to do. "We gave way to it and were driven," wrote his biographer.

That is what Gerber Schafer in Reading, Pennsylvania, did. His story is told in *Guideposts*. In World War I he enlisted in the air corps. He was handsome, sturdy of body and sound of nerve. There came a forced landing, a badly hurt back, a series of painful operations. One by one his joints stiffened. One day the doctor said, "Sarge, you may as well face it . . ."

He faced a lifetime on his back with unbearable pain. He wanted to die, but he discovered a way of life instead. He learned that there were other cripples he could help. With canceled stamps begged from friends he bought a motorized scooter for a paralyzed Negro boy who wanted to sell papers. It was thrilling to know that, on his back, he could still be useful. He was off on his career. He works from early morning till midnight prompting fund-raising projects, securing help for needy people. He is working for God from a hospital bed. The remarkable thing is that he can only think, talk and listen. Not a muscle below his chin works.

Faced by unfavorable winds he was driven by them, but think what he made of his altered situation!

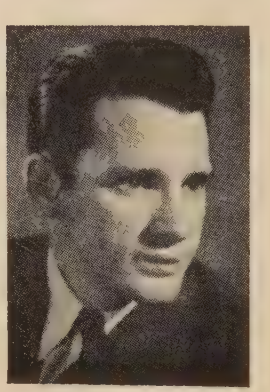
Come one step further and see that when there are winds against which we cannot sail, we are

(Continued on page 18)

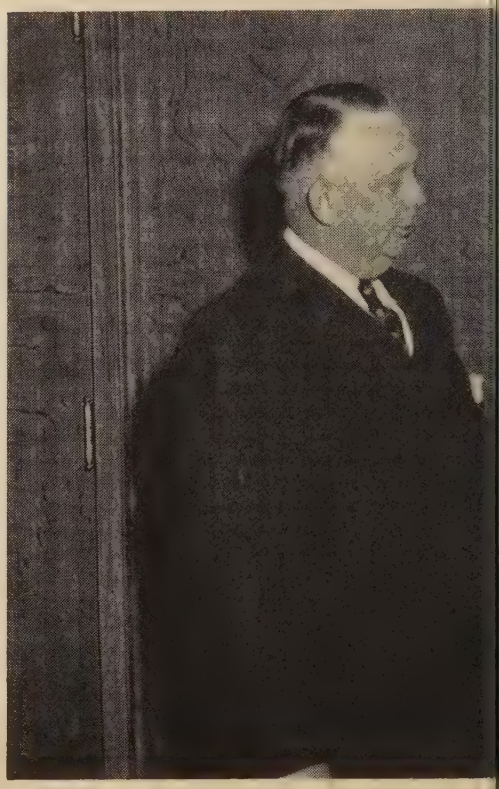
Presenting th

THE SEMINARIAN H

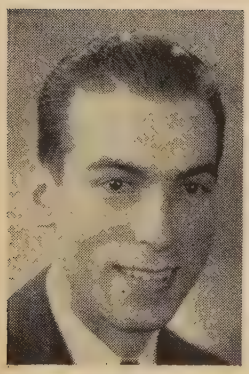
Allan J. Pickering
McCormick Theological Seminary,
Chicago, Ill.
Second Selection



B. L. Barnes
School of Religion, Butler University,
Indianapolis, Ind.
Honorable Mention



William G. Lorenz (center) of McCormick T
as the 1952 Seminarian Preacher of the Ye
ecutive director of the Chicago Sunday Even
the Illinois Central Railroad, presided wher
audience of the Chicago Sunday Evening Cl



August J. Molnar, Jr.
The Theological Seminary (Evangelical and
Reformed), Lancaster, Penna.
Honorable Mention

McCORMICK

A national board of seven judges selected Willia
Seminarian Preacher of the Year. The selection wa
Evening Club in order to encourage more effectiv
ceived a check for $100 and an expense-paid trip
ography and sermon begin on page 4.

**The judges who made the final selections fr
ticipating seminaries were: Oscar F. Blackw
Washington, D.C.; Gerald Kennedy, bishop of
Garland Evans Hopkins, managing editor of
Church, New York; Bradshaw Mintener, vic
Methodist layman; Alton M. Motter, Executive
editor of the Pulpit and A. Milton Smith, pasto
The details concerning the 1953 Seminarian**

Floyd P. Peterson
Moravian Theological Seminary,
Bethlehem, Penna.
Honorable Mention

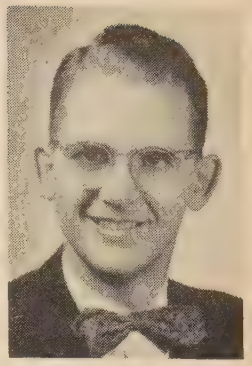
)52 Selection of
ACHER OF THE YEAR

Seminary is presented to Wayne A. Johnston (left)
M. Motter, associate editor of the Pulpit and ex-
Ir. Johnston, a trustee of the Club and president of
n Lorenz preached his sermon before a capacity
estra Hall.

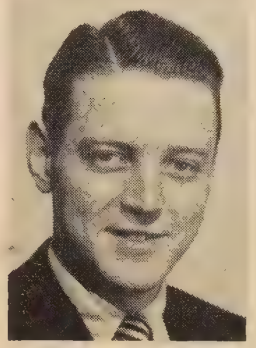
DENT SELECTED

nz of the McCormick Theological Seminary as the 1952
d by the Pulpit in cooperation with the Chicago Sunday
g among seminary students of the nation. Mr. Lorenz re-
his sermon at the Chicago Sunday Evening Club. His bi-

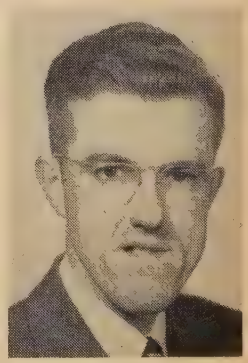
g a large group of candidates nominated by par-
stor of the Lutheran Church of the Reformation,
Angeles, California, area of the Methodist Church;
t; Robert J. McCracken, minister of the Riverside
t of Pillsbury Mills, Minneapolis, and a prominent
of the Chicago Sunday Evening Club and associate
irst Church of the Nazarene, Kansas City, Missouri.
will appear in our October issue.



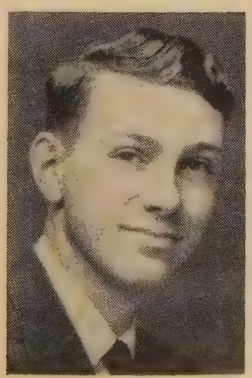
Malcolm C. Nygren
McCormick Theological Seminary,
Chicago, Ill.
Third Selection



Walter W. Witte, Jr.
Berkeley Divinity School,
New Haven, Conn.
Honorable Mention



Harvey O. Wilfred
School of the Bible, Phillips University,
Enid, Oklahoma
Honorable Mention



Gordon J. Sperling
The Lutheran Theological
Seminary, Gettysburg, Penna.
Honorable Mention

Kenneth W. Peterson
Garrett Biblical Institute,
Evanston, Ill.
Honorable Mention

Unfavorable Winds

(Continued from page 15)

not alone. To all men and women of faith there comes the assurance which came to Paul in the storm: God is with us.

There wasn't much that the crew in Paul's boat could do to help themselves in the storm, but they did what they could. The cargo was secured in the hold so that it would not shift and batter the sides. Ropes were passed over the side of the ship, under her bottom and across the deck, and secured. The crew dropped a drag to slow the progress of the ship, and hauled in all but the storm sails. Of all this Paul must have approved. But he knew that their safety was not in their seamanship or their work, but in the hand of God.

We Are Not Alone

It is always true that "heaven helps those who help themselves," but in life's real storms there is often very little that we can do. Then Henry Van Dyke's poem becomes a prayer for our condition:

O Maker of the Mighty Deep
Whereon our vessels fare,
Above our life's adventure keep
Thy faithful watch and care.
In Thee we trust, whate'er befall;
Thy sea is great, our boats are small.

We know not where the secret tides
Will help us or delay,
Nor where the lurking tempest hides,
Nor where the fogs are gray.
We trust in Thee, whate'er befall;
Thy sea is great, our ships are small.

The difference between a Christian and a non-Christian does not always appear on the surface. Perhaps that is well; God does not ask us to make a pious parade of our faith. But when life's sea runs high, the difference becomes evident. The sailors on Paul's ship were frightened out of their appetite, and attempted to escape on the lifeboat as soon as land was near. There are many like them, whose reaction to trouble is fear or flight. The centurion was trained to discipline his feelings, and with the stoical fortitude befitting a Roman officer he refrained from showing his fear. There are many such stoical souls who keep a stiff upper lip. In contrast with both the fear of the sailors and the stoicism of the centurion was Paul. He said, "Take heart, men, for I have faith in God."

Many paraphrases have been written of the 23rd Psalm. David MacLennan quotes one written by a sailor which is worth our hearing:

The Lord is my Pilot, I shall not drift.
He lighted me across the dark waters.
He steereth me in deep channels.
He keepeth my log.
He guideth me by the star of holiness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I sail through the thunders and tempests of life, I shall dread no danger, for Thou art with me.
Thy love and Thy care they shelter me.

Over the winds of fate there is the hand of God in whom we trust.

If you believe that, you are ready to hear the final point of my message. It is simply this: when the storm ends we might well find ourselves better off than we were before.

Paul wanted to winter in Fair Havens. Had they taken his advice they might have been sorry. After all, the sailors thought it wasn't secure enough. They tried to sail only to Phoenix, just a twelve-hour voyage to the other end of Crete. When the storm cleared they were on the island of Malta, 500 miles closer to their destination than they expected to be.

During the winter Paul had the opportunity of ministering by healing many of the natives. We may be sure he preached the gospel to them as well. It had been a rough journey, but the storm drove Paul closer to his destination and gave him opportunity to serve Christ.

If the real goal of life is not comfort, ease and pleasure, but character, strength and a chance to serve others, we might well welcome the storm. Unfavorable winds may not be as bad as they seem. To this many of those who "have come out of great tribulation" will gladly testify. We may be forced by storms to throw off some of our unessential cargo, but we will be none the worse for that. This is the ministry of trouble.

Thy Word, O Lord, Unto Our Feet

Tune: *All Saints, New. CMD*

THY Word, O Lord, unto our feet
A lighted lamp shall be,
To guide our footsteps on the path
That upward leads to thee.
We praise thee for the Word of truth
Thou gavest to endure,
Through endless generations proved
So steadfast, strong and sure.

We thank thee for the holy men
Of ages long ago,
Who wrote the Word, inspired by thee,
That all mankind might know.
We thank thee for the saints and scribes
Of every tongue and age,
Who give the Word new life, as they
Translate the sacred page.

We praise thee for the Word made flesh
In Jesus Christ, our Lord;
Who, adding love, fulfilled the law,
Thereby revealing God.
Gird us with truth, that we may stand
For thee, O Lord of love;
Thy living gospels here below
Till joined with thee above.

ERNEST K. EMURIAN.

[*Written for the occasion of the publication, on September 30, 1952, of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.*]

Christians and the Lord's Day

By Paul E. Turk

Exodus 20:8.

CHRISTIANS differ about how the Sabbath Day should be spent. Our attitudes depend upon our training and background, our past experiences and the environment in which we live. Yet most of us take the modern Sunday schedule for granted without stopping to consider whether today's trend is leading us down a path of destruction. We accept without much question the great social changes that have come about in the last fifty years. We may comment that the Sunday of today is a far cry from the day our forebears observed, usually with the feeling that the Sunday of today is a great improvement. Is this entirely true? Has not the time come for Christians to revitalize for our day the commandment, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy"?

Most of us would not want to go back to the Sabbath of a century ago. On too many occasions it was merely a day to be endured rather than one to be enjoyed. Ruskin once said that Monday morning was the happiest morning of the week because it would be six whole days until Sunday rolled around again. Of course, the irksome restrictions of the oldtime observance are the aspect most often described. It was not without its good points. A good many Sundays of our earliest years, I am sure, are recalled with pleasant memories. Now, however, we live in a different age with new customs and practices. The eight-hour work day has brought more leisure time with opportunities for physical exercise, as well as improved cultural and educational opportunities. Moreover, modern transportation, especially the automobile, has effected a revolutionary change in our way of living. Our week ends become a time for visiting distant relatives and friends, going to lakes and streams, attending big athletic events in our cities or mammoth picnics in the countryside. Sunday is the day when traffic is heaviest. It is important to decide whether we will run the wheels or be run by them. I say that if the present trend continues, if this day becomes more and more secularized, your grandchildren won't even know the meaning of Sunday because it will be no different from the rest of the days of the week.

The other day we went out to visit a gorgeous flower show at the Garfield park conservatory in Chicago. As I took a few pictures amid the beauty, I noticed prominent signs declaring certain restrictions. You were expected to keep on the paths. You were not allowed to touch the flowers, let alone pick one. You may protest and say, "It is a public place; this is a free country; people should be allowed to do as they please." Well, there are some people in this world who voluntarily exercise self-discipline. They could wander into the conservatory and leave it as beautiful as they found it. Unfortunately, however, many people seem to have a wanton, selfish streak in them, and I would hate to think how this bit of Eden would look were their liberties not restricted. Therefore, in order that everyone may enjoy the conservatory, restrictions are placed upon everybody.

Spiritual Refreshment

Sunday is such a conservatory in the noisy din of a busy week. It is a little oasis in a somewhat monotonous life. Sunday has to be protected from vandals and from wanton thoughtlessness if we are to have a Sunday in the years to come.

If we lived in an ideal society we would probably give ample time and opportunity to developing all aspects of our lives—the physical, the mental, and the spiritual. We would see to it that there was a happy balance. But we do not live in an ideal society, and until that time comes Christians need to exercise a special concern about the Sabbath Day and its use for spiritual refreshment.

Is the first concern of people nowadays attending church or providing a time for meditation? No, it is more important for many to catch up on workaday tasks that can't be crowded into the other six days. The garden and the lawn take up the Sunday leisure of many well meaning citizens. On Sunday we find the largest crowds at sports events, the largest picnics being held, the largest crowds at the theaters. I am not saying it is wicked or immoral to participate in some of these things, but the deeper question is, am I destroying the purpose of Sunday? Am I substituting these events for a concern about God? I believe we must guard Sunday against the people who would destroy it altogether.

It is up to the individual to decide finally what

PAUL E. TURK came to Euclid Avenue Methodist Church, Oak Park, Ill., following three other pastorates in the same state. A graduate of Aurora College, he received his B.D. degree from Garrett Biblical Institute and serves as youth advisor for the 17,000 Methodist young people of the Rock River conference in northern Illinois. His sermon deals with a timely theme in the life of the Christian.

is right or wrong for Sunday. His decision may depend on his background, his training, his occupation. But the basic question he must answer for himself is, am I destroying the purpose of Sunday and making this conservatory into the same kind of jungle as the rest of the week?

How should the Sabbath be observed? Let me suggest three ingredients that I believe every Christian ought to include in his observance of an average Sunday.

Three Ingredients

First, every Sabbath should include some rest. Actual tests have proved that the person who rests on Sunday gets more done during the rest of the week than the person who works all seven days. Those who work continually bring on themselves frayed nerves and broken minds and bodies. To fail to take time to rest is to die long before our time. It is a fact that in the old days of expeditions across the plains and mountains to California, the groups led by religious men who paused to rest on the seventh day got to the coast ahead of those that traveled seven days every week. Yes, wise were our spiritual forefathers who planned that the seventh day should be a day of rest. Every Sabbath should include some time for rest and relaxation and the gathering of physical strength as resource for the tasks to come.

Second, each well spent Lord's Day should have some time for worship. I am speaking now of worship and meditation in a church of your choice. "Jesus went to the synagogue on the Sabbath, as was his custom." Roger Williams once said, "A little key may unlock a box wherein lies a bunch of keys." Worship is that little key. It is a universal need. Life is too hectic; too often it is shot to pieces; and if we are to solve this jigsaw puzzle, we must find time on the Sabbath day to worship. We can never live successfully without this element. Science with all its inventions won't teach us to forgive nor to love our neighbor. Religion and worsip are needed if we are to live at our best.

A Day to Help Others

Finally, our Sabbath Day should include opportunities to help other people. When have you last helped someone without regard to reward or money or prestige or popularity? When have you last given up something you had your heart set on to do something for your neighbor? Think how many people today are lonely, how many have broken hearts, how many are invalids to whom a word of personal cheer would be a godsend. You may say, "I haven't time." *You have your Sundays.* What a wonderful day it could be! Instead of always thinking of *your* pleasure, *your* happiness, *your* fun, why not think of what you might do to make it God's day for someone else? I'm sure you would find yourself remembering it as a day of singular pleasure and happiness for yourself too.

There are so many things wrong with the world. We grumble about it. We complain that the times are out of joint. What if we all spent one hour a week trying to put things right? Get off the bench, leave the sidelines, use parts of your Sundays for correcting existing evils. The place to begin is right in your own community. Let your Sundays include a period of rest and relaxation, a period of worship and meditation, and a period devoted to the service of other people.

Leslie Weatherhead, the great London preacher, once went to visit a dying man. The man was afraid to die. Dr. Weatherhead talked to him about God and the things of the spirit. The man said, "I have been too busy for those things. I have never had time." But he had had over 4,000 Sundays!

A Definition of Heaven and Hell

The story is told of a man who dreamed that he died and found himself in a region of great comfort and delight. Soon he met a person who greeted him cordially and urged him to make himself comfortable. His host took him to a beautiful house, filled with every imaginable luxury, and told him that he might have anything his heart desired. The man gratefully accepted the offer, thankful that he had lived so good a life on earth. At first time passed in a succession of lavish meals, with the most pleasant diversions in between. The man thought of all eternity before him in such joy and was even happier than he had been.

After a while, however, he began to be somewhat restless. His host, quick to anticipate his wishes, brought various things to please him. But somehow none of them seemed to satisfy. Expressing some concern, the host asked what he would like:

The man said: "I hate to complain, but I am getting a bit tired of all this. You have been so kind and so attentive that I don't want to seem ungracious. However, I think it would be just a little bit better if I had a few problems to struggle with. If it's not asking too much, I wonder if you could give me some hard work to do."

His host looked very serious. "I'm sorry," he said, "but that's impossible here. You can have everything else you want, but you simply are not allowed to have any work to worry about."

The man was definitely upset. "No problems?" he said. "No work to struggle with? What kind of eternity is that going to be? Why, I wish I'd gone to hell, instead."

At that his host looked at him in astonishment and asked, "Where do you think you are?"—*Dwight C. Smith, Mt. Vernon Church, Boston, Mass.*

Pulpit Post

Religious Art Exhibit at Union

SIR: I read with great interest Dr. Seidenspinner's article "Religious Art of Today" (July). The Liturgical Arts Society has indeed done a great deal to foster a revival of living religious art.

The Protestant churches are also beginning to awaken to the necessity of speaking to modern man through contemporary religious art. On Dec. 1-16, 1952, at Union Theological Seminary, New York city, an Exhibit of Contemporary Religious Art will be held. This exhibit will contain examples of fine painting, sculpture and architecture, selected with the needs of the local church in mind.

It is hoped that as many of your readers as possible will arrange to attend, see what is being done on this "growing edge" of Protestant life, and take back new ideas to their congregations.

MIRIAM DEWEY ROSS,
Chairman, Religious Art Committee.
Union Theological Seminary,
New York, N. Y.

A Memorable Honor

SIR: Thank you for including my sermon, "Hours and Wages," in the August PULPIT. I have just read the issue with appreciation.

You have bestowed a very unique and doubtless memorable honor upon me. As a matter of fact, you may have given me a name which at least to the alumnae of the institution is above every name. I am referring to the statement that I received "earlier training at Wellesley." And what training you will never guess! My wife, a graduate of Wellesley, and I frequently say in fun that our five boys would like nothing better than to go to Wellesley. But now that I have had the mysterious distinction of graduating from this elite women's college, doubtless it will deflect their interest, though I hope not permanently!

Vine St. Christian, G. CURTIS JONES.
Nashville, Tenn.

The Pulpit Goes to Conference

SIR: I continue to enjoy The Pulpit because I find it stimulating and helpful. The article, "Should The Preacher Also Be a Teacher?" (June) is very excellent, and I write my sincere appreciation for this important emphasis. I am planning to use this for a summer conference for ministers at McCormick Seminary.

GORDON W. MATTICE.
Board of Christian Education,
Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Solid Meat

SIR: Not many issues of The Pulpit have given me so much as the July number. Dr. Hulme's article, "Effective Preaching Includes Counseling," is most stimulating. It is the sort of thing I would want to require my students to read if I were teaching in a seminary. Will you try to get him to write more for us like this? Donald Macleod, William H. Hudnut, Jr., Frederick W. Schroeder and Harold Paul Sloan have given us solid meat and great inspiration.

Chicago Heights Christian, CARL H. WILHELM.
Chicago Heights, Ill.

Hymns for Today

SIR: You may be interested to know that our church has used one of your "Hymns for Today," as you suggest in your "For the Record" (August).

It is our custom to have a "hymn of the month." Last January we used Jesse M. Wester's "O Church of God, Lift Up Thy Voice," which was published in your January issue. We made enough copies of the hymn on our duplicating machine to paste one in our hymnal opposite the page on which is "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past," set to the tune, *St. Anne*. This took some time and effort, but we feel that it was well worth it. Our people enjoy singing this hymn. We shall be doing this with others.

Thank you for the good work you are doing through the Pulpit.

First Presbyterian (U.S.), JOE T. SUDDUTH.
Campbellsville, Ky.

Business Manager?

SIR: I note Mr. Jones' definition of the "successful" minister in the July issue. May I suggest that the definition as given seems to me quite inadequate. Mr. Jones apparently considers the minister to be a business manager.

Sturgeon Bay, Wis. EMERSON W. HARRIS.

Keeping Mentally Alert

SIR: The Pulpit is a very helpful journal. Working in the country fairly far from other ministers and from the various conferences, lectures and institutes, I need it to keep mentally alert.

North Sullivan, Me. MARGARET HENRICHSEN.

Did Enslin Mean It?

DR. ENSLIN: Yours is by far the best part of The Pulpit. Indeed, it is about the only good reason I have for subscribing to it, for most of the sermons are scarcely worth the trouble of reading. Hence I am the more amazed at such an article as the one in the August issue. I can scarcely think you mean what you say, or that these untypical half-truths represent your real thought.

To depend on the merits of Jesus and on the merits of men is by no means "in essence really the same." How can you even imagine it is? If men have misunderstood God because of the love of Christ, that does not alter the fact that in *him* alone have we hope of salvation, no matter which theory of the atonement you hold. That we do pray in his name, that we do have access to God through the one Mediator, is so emphasized in so many places that to deny it is simply to throw out the whole New Testament. That God loves each of us personally, that he desires us, is true. Only for that reason did Jesus die for us. If you are ashamed to "buttress" your request by an appeal to Christ you are denying his very mission and his place as your Savior. Is that anything else than the vain pride of man in thinking he needs no salvation by another? What have we that we haven't received? By *grace* we are saved.

Please, Dr. Enslin, prick the foibles of the ministry, laugh at us, chide us, ruin our little pretensions and our vanities, strike down our sins—but don't give us more of this strange and, I am sure, not really thought-out, half-baked theology of the kind we expect to find in some sermons, but not from you. I know you are a far better theologian than this would make you seem. I trust you didn't really mean it.

CYRUS M. WALLICK.
Lutheran Church of Our Saviour,
Dayton, Ohio.

30 Years Behind

SIR: The real heart of Protestantism is that we are saved through faith in Jesus Christ. Dr. Enslin seems to be 30 years behind the times. I do not know where he has been hiding during the annihilation of modernism and the rediscovery of the gospel, but it's time he came out before he does any more harm.

Reformation Lutheran, HAROLD E. BERG.
St. Paul, Minn.

Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

An Open Letter to St. Paul

"YE observe days, and months, and seasons, and years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain." Tut, tut, Paul! Do you not realize how reactionary you are? You haven't seen anything! You may have thought that the Jewish calendar with its feasts and celebrations was reasonably full. Then, of course, the number of extra bank holidays in Greece, to say nothing of Rome's never-failing supply, was considerable. But if they got under your skin, thank your lucky stars that you were called to be an apostle to the Gentiles nineteen hundred years ago, not to America and its genteel (and not so genteel) in 1952.

At the moment we are going through the mild flurry known as Father's Day. It falls on a Sunday, of course, so that we preachers can do our bit in hallowing it. For several weeks our papers have carried advertisements of the sort of thing father will appreciate on his day. Most of the pictures show him, to be sure, sprawled in his easychair, dropping in regal wise cigarette or cigar (it depends on the company advertising) ashes on the rug, while his family hovers over him with yearning fondness. Just how the preachers' encomiums will reach him is perhaps hard to say. You simply can't take Four Roses to church. Of course, we do have television.

For a while this Father's Day was a sort of "also ran," a pale reflection of the original article, Mother's Day. On that sacred occasion you honor your mother very efficiently. If she is dead, you wear a white carnation; if she is still living, a red one. (Since carnations are now very expensive, you can get lovely paper ones.) In some of our more up-and-coming churches, mother may even be presented a slightly wilted nosegay by one of the laborers in the sanctuary. In a church in which I was formerly a member we used to have an especially lovely setting. The pulpit was tastily arranged as a living room with rocking chairs and mother's knitting and specs on the center table. "Whistler's Mother" (one of our especial triumphs in the arts) hung over the baptistry. The preacher sprawled in an easychair—he used to wear carpet slippers in honor of the day—and, between "Mother Machree" and "Tell Mother I'll be There," preached a fruity sermon in a near-horizontal position from his favorite Mother's Day text: "For his mother was his counselor." Of course he omitted the concluding words of that famous tribute to Athaliah, daughter of Omri, in the manner known to you and your contemporaries. If you could have seen how the congregation ate it up, you would not have been afraid—you would have *known*—that you were not the only apostle who had labored in vain.

Eventually some of our leaders awoke to the fact that father was an adjunct to mother if she really was to have her day, and so he started to cash in. But Father's Day still lacks the real class of the earlier anniversary. Every now and then it is urged that we add to the ecclesiastical calendar a Mother-in-Law's Day. This has its possibilities, even though as yet it has not made the grade. Give us time; we are young yet. And then there are rumblings in the offing that Grandfather's Day is, if not actually aborning, at least in a state of ecclesiastical gestation.

But don't think that we are limited to Family Days or Weeks. Perish the thought! We have them for every imaginable sort of occasion. Actually we have run out of free days—not to mention weeks. In consequence it often happens that two or three holy days are being celebrated at the same time. And each one is an occasion for the preacher to be importuned by mail and given his orders by some itchy-pants on his board of deacons, who insists that the "dear old church" is definitely slowing down if its pastor does not come across with a spiritual but snappy pulpit kick-off sermon. In consequence, when three such occasions fall on the same date, the sermon is a sort of homiletic tutti-frutti. To such commonplace varieties as Armed Services Day, I'm-Glad-I'm-an-American Week and Don't-Spit-on-the-Sidewalk Day we are constantly adding new ones. Last week's paper announced "National Secretaries Week." Last year saw the birth of Be-Kind-to-Disk-Jockeys Week.

It is really very exciting. No longer do you have to worry about sermon topics. They are ready to hand, as you can see. No longer does a preacher have to pick other men's brains by the laborious old-fashioned method of reading printed sermons and then making them his own by slightly muddling the grammar. All the agencies involved—and, of course, our denominational headquarters too—are only too glad to provide you with subject, outline, proof texts, and sob stories guaranteed first to wow your congregation, then to make them weep.

Try to buck the traffic, and you'll think that fighting wild beasts at Ephesus was child's play. You might even wonder if you weren't a wee bit too severe with the foolish Galatians and their interest in Have-Nothing-to-Do-with-Asia Day and Be-Kind-to-Proconsuls Week.

• *Courage Beyond Fear*

A VERY interesting story was told me during the days of the British blitz by a British air warden sent here to train people for our own civilian defense. There was a certain Londoner who was frightened to death at the imminence of war. But he was a very God-fearing man. Then came the blitz and this timid soul became the most heroic air raid warden in his district; he felt he was in God's hands.

Jesus perceived the secret of courage like this man's when he said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven." The poor in spirit, the fearful, the dispirited, the timid, eventually pass beyond fear and find the courage of God; for the poor in spirit are willing to become dependent upon God, and being dependent they quaff the deepest draughts of courage. Theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Remember that the end of things is not your fear. The end of things is the courage which lies beyond fear.—*Frank A. Court, St. Paul Methodist, Lincoln, Neb.*

• *Losing When We Think We Are Winning*

IT is possible to lose when we think we are winning. In 1918 we won the "war to end all wars"—but wars were not ended. In 1945 we won the war of the "Four Freedoms"—but men are not yet free. We now find ourselves in a spiritual struggle between Christianity and communism. It is possible that we might win in this struggle and still suffer a defeat for the way of Christ. In a little book, *The Unknown Disciple*, Judas suggested to Jesus a plan to end the oppression of the Jews by crushing the Romans. With a simple question Jesus replied: "Will that end oppression?"—*Robert G. Tuttle, Broad Street Methodist, Statesville, N. C.*

By Victor E. Beck

This Lutheran pastor calls for sermons which recognize God's truth and man's need

The Timeless and the Timely

BY a conservative estimate, 1,184,813 sermons are preached from Christian pulpits each week. Among these "sermons" are some that are little more than reviews of world affairs. Others are mere discourses, something like a newspaper article, designed to fit the space or time allotted. On the other hand, there are sermons that are little more than surveys of Bible history, without specific relevance to any particular subsequent period in time.

Purpose of Preaching

The purpose of preaching may be said to be bringing man into the realm of the timeless in order that he may see his responsibility in time. Preaching must relate vertical and horizontal truth, even though the result is a cross.

How can we relate the timeless and the timely? How can we make an event in history vital to our day? How can we personalize what seems to be an abstraction? How can we make the emancipation of the soul through the cross of Christ as meaningful as the liberation of the body through the Emancipation Proclamation?

By the "timeless" such factors are meant as the Bible, the atonement in Christ, and the Sacraments. By the "timely" is understood the experience of people living today.

Sometimes one hears a minister say, "I simply cannot preach my sermons over again." If this is so, it offers room for serious thinking. One may ask, Why not? The answer must be that there was not the proper relating of the timeless and the timely. The likelihood is that there was too much of the timely, so that the sermon was merely a commentary on current events and was not properly integrated with the timeless. The timely which embodies an eternal truth is timeless; and timeless truth will be forever timely. If we go back to old sermons and discover that they were too "timely" we also find that they lacked the element of timelessness. They were simply passing remarks concerning something ephemeral.

Truth Is Eternal

There is something timeless in the occasional, and something occasional in the timeless. A truth is both eternal and contemporary. If I go to church to hear a sermon, I want to hear some eternal truth. But I do not want to hear that truth in a vacuum. I want to know how it is true for me, how it applies to me, and what it may mean to others through me.

The Bible is both timeless and timely. It has eternal truth, yet it is said that the Bible is more up to date than tomorrow's newspaper and more modern than the next generation. When the spirit of the Bible permeates our preaching, we can incorporate the timeless into the occasional, and make the occasional have abiding meaning and application for our lives today. "Blessed are the peacemakers" contains an eternal truth, yet how timely!

A sermon properly saturated with Scripture can never be a failure. We remember, however, that it is possible to quote and misquote, wresting verses from their setting or riding hobbies to strengthen points of contention.

The problem before us is also faced in other professions. The physician must relate the timeless and the timely. Out of the body of scientific truth and knowledge he must find the application for each patient. His success lies just there. This test also applies to the teacher and the lawyer. Their success lies in taking the timeless and relating it to the day and the conditions in which they live.

No Isolated Problem

We may be thinking, but with preaching it is different. It is a message that has something for everyone. There is some truth in this statement, but we dare not fall back on such a generality. If that were entirely true, why should Paul speak about rightly dividing the word of truth? Why should there be effort at emphasizing a balance of the law and the gospel? Why the church year, with its carefully selected Scripture lessons with their definite sequence?

When we read the sermons in Acts we observe that they contain a historical element, based on the assumption that the hearers knew the history. And they did! This was the reason they were interested in parts of the sermons. Their trouble, however, lay in the fact that they were interested only so long as the preacher spoke about the glory of their history. But when the timely—the fulfillment, the application, Christ and his resurrection—was introduced, they usually rebelled.

Knowledge of the Past

One of the problems that we face is the lack of biblical knowledge in our congregations today. Simply to say that we should speak the language of our day and speak so that people can understand, does not compensate for the audience's loss of comprehension of the rich ecclesiastical terms for which there cannot be a real substitute. There must be a background of historical knowledge in any field if we are properly to relate the timeless and the timely.

Illustrations also play an important part in relating the timeless and the timely in our preaching. They should illustrate, and not clutter, the sermon. If an illustration embodies a universal truth, even though it may be specific and concrete, it is also timeless. Illustrations taken from the Bible are still unequaled. The art of illustration is as important as it is rare.

Good use of illustrations, a background of historical knowledge, a proper application of the eternal Word to present life, are among the essential factors in relating the timeless and the timely in our preaching.

To a Revolutionist

With deadly drive Your grim advance
Against tradition swept the world.
But we have found a way to conquer
even You.
We talk like rebels, deprecate tradition,
Discuss with unchanged ears a world of change,
And make of You, tradition-smashing Christ,
Another dead tradition!

HAROLD E. FEY.

VICTOR E. BECK is pastor of historic Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, New York. A graduate of Augustana Seminary, Rock Island, Ill., he received his Master of Arts degree from Yale University and a Ph.D. from Boston University. Before coming to New York he served parishes in four other states.

Pulpit Paragraphs

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

• *Christianity in Korea*

ABOUT three years ago one of our consecrated men told us of his experience. One day his mail brought this word from William N. Blair of northern Korea: "I have just had the privilege of being the first missionary allowed by the Russians to visit northern Korea. Sunday I spoke to large congregations in nine Korean churches. In Pyengyang, the Russian capital city, I spoke at a great mass meeting on the Central Church Hill to 15,000 Christians from some 50 churches of the city."

The recipient of this letter spent seven months with Dr. Blair and saw thousands turned to Christ. At one place, 8,000 people attended the three closing services. At another place the old men of the village built a special "prayer house" and daily spent hours in intercession. One does not know what the situation in Korea may be at this moment; but one does know that a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God is able to take care of his own.—*Herbert Booth Smith, First Presbyterian, Burlingame, Calif.*

• *Three Kinds of Ministers*

THERE are really three kinds of ministers. One kind is best described with the words, "Here am I; let me do everything for you." To become the bond slave or the bellhop of a congregation is not to be a servant for the sake of Jesus Christ. Another kind of pastor is described in the words, "Here am I; do all you can for me and I will be your private chaplain, blessing your ways." The people often enjoy this type of pastor. They will praise him to his face, brag about him to others, send him to Europe and see that he belongs to the right groups. But he will not be a servant for Jesus' sake. The third type boldly declares, "Here is Jesus Christ; let us together do all we can for him in our lives, in our community and in our world."—*John G. Simmons, St. Matthew's Lutheran, North Hollywood, Calif.*

• *The Directions from Above*

JOHN Scott Douglas in his book *The Mystery of the Sea Bell* tells of Ronnie, a young lad who learns to dive from a vessel called the Seaspray. In order to stay at the bottom of the ocean one must have weights on his feet. Ronnie discovers that he is entirely dependent on the man above who stands on the Seaspray and pumps oxygen to him. He cannot live without this man. Ronnie does not do as he pleases; if he does he will perish. He does as the man above pleases. There may be storms and changes of tide that may cause the man above to redirect Ronnie's steps on the ocean floor. The author says, "There are old divers and bold divers, but there are no old and bold divers."

This story reminds one of the Christian life. It is good to walk in mystic communion with Christ, but still good to be weighted down with the burdens and tragedies of this present day. Likewise, it is only God who can give us life through Jesus Christ. "I am the way." We are completely dependent on him. If we work in complete cooperation with the Man Above, we have life.—*Paul J. Acker, First Methodist, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.*

Pulpit Calendar

Sept. 1—Labor Day.
Sept. 7—14th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 14—15th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 21—16th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 28—17th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 28—Oct. 5—Religious Education Week.
Sept. 29—Day of Atonement (Jewish).
Sept. 30—Revised Standard Version Bible Observance.
Oct. 5—18th Sunday after Pentecost. World-Wide Communion Sunday.
Oct. 9—Thanksgiving Day—Canada.
Oct. 12—19th Sunday after Pentecost. Men and Missions Sunday.
Oct. 19—20th Sunday after Pentecost. World Order Sunday.
Oct. 24—United Nations Day.
Oct. 26—21st Sunday after Pentecost. Reformation Sunday.
Oct. 31—Reformation Day.
Nov. 1—All Saints' Day.
Nov. 2—All Souls' Day. 22nd Sunday after Pentecost.
Nov. 4—Election Day.
Nov. 9—23rd Sunday after Pentecost.
Nov. 9-15—American Education Week.
Nov. 16—24th Sunday after Pentecost.
Nov. 23—25th Sunday after Pentecost. Thanksgiving Sunday.
Nov. 27—Thanksgiving Day

SEASONS: Kingdomtide; Reformation; Thanksgiving.

ALTAR COLORS: Kingdomtide, green; Reformation, red; Thanksgiving, red.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of national or religious significance.)

• *Christian World Action*

A LONG time ago in Taiku, North China, a young man, suffering from tuberculosis of the skin, was brought to the Taiku mission hospital. He was a non-Christian and he came from a non-Christian home and village. The hospital cared for him for several months and finally cured him. The young man returned to his village happy and well.

In a short time he was back again at the hospital. Did he have a relapse? Oh no, he was asking to be enrolled for training as a male nurse at the hospital. He explained: "In the long days of my illness it became clear to me that the doctors and nurses of the hospital were concerned with my poor body because they were Christian. I wish to become a Christian because of what they did for me. I wish to be able to do for others what they did for me."

After four years of training the male nurse graduated. He remained on as a member of the hospital staff. And today he is still there in Taiku, North China—far out in Shansi province—hard at work at the mission hospital which saved his life, the director of its nursing staff.

This type of Christian love and service rendered by our missionaries and national leaders is helping to make Christians in deed and example even in those lands where one may not be Christian in name—*Quentin Leiser, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston, Mass.*

• *Let There Be Light!*

AT a recent meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science the most exciting discovery was described by Prof. E. Newton Harvey of Princeton University. Dr. Harvey, who has been in charge of the intensive study, revealed that two new types of light-giving chemicals have been identified. For centuries people have watched fireflies in the gathering dusk and have dreamed of harnessing their light. The dream is about to be realized and we are at the gate of a new age of lighting by chemicals, an era of "cold light."

Even so, "cold light" like electric light cannot illumine the human soul. We still stand in need of spiritual illumination. Our minds and hearts still need light on the nature of God, light on the meaning of human existence, light on the pathway of tomorrow, light on the road to world peace. All the chemical light in the world cannot replace the light which has come into the world in Jesus Christ. We must say as John did about the Master, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men."—*Roger J. Squire, First Methodist, Red Bank, N. J.*

New Harper Books

JOYOUS ADVENTURE

By David A. MacLennan

Here are twenty-two sermons written with freshness and vitality. In his affirmation of a positive faith, Dr. MacLennan reflects the hopeful, optimistic outlook of the first Christians. Each sermon is based on the central truth of the Gospel celebrated in the great days and seasons of the Christian year. The inspiring theme developed by the author is that a truly Christian life is one of JOYOUS ADVENTURE. His use of the Bible is new and provocative, his "human-interest" stories and well-chosen poetry fit the purpose well, and he often uses novel touches to bring the Gospel alive. This widely read and frequently heard preacher is professor of preaching and pastoral care at Yale. $2.50

Faith and Order Volumes—Prepared in Connection with the Lund Conference

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

edited by R. Newton Flew

Leading representatives of the chief Christian communions give their concepts of the nature of the church in an attempt to find common ground for unity. $4.00

INTERCOMMUNION

edited by Donald Baillie and John Marsh

How to increase fellowship among the Christian denominations by interparticipation in the communion service is considered, both in its historic and present-day aspects. $4.00

WAYS YOUTH LEARN

by Clarice Bowman

An experienced leader, familiar both with the mood and temper of youth and with the realities of her faith, presents a desperately needed guide for youth workers. Miss Bowman writes fully of the methods by which the Christian faith can become a vital part of the lives of young people. $2.50

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF PRAYER

by Albert E. Day

This book tells of the spiritual journey of a leading churchman and of his discoveries along the way of the reality, worth and power of prayer. Ministers will be attracted by the autobiographical note wherein they will see many of their own problems reflected. $2.50

ON PROVING GOD

by Roger Hazelton

ON PROVING GOD is a handbook for the Christian believer which prepares him to answer the constant challenges to give a reason for the faith that is in him. This is an extremely clear and reasonable treatise by an outstanding young theologian and teacher. $2.50

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LYNN J. RADCLIFFE

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He outlines the rigorous but essential discipline required for any real life of prayer—taking time for regular devotional periods and preparing for prayer through solitude, devotional study, and right living.

While *MAKING PRAYER REAL* offers no easy methods or secret short cuts to a fuller prayer life, it *does* provide help for those who want to pray more effectively, to be helped by prayer, to help others by prayer, and actually to feel God's Presence.

Contents

Preludes to Prayer: WANTED: A SPIRITUAL RENAISSANCE!—WHEN NEW LIFE BREAKS THROUGH—A WAY TO MASTERY—THE TRAINING GROUND OF THE SPIRIT

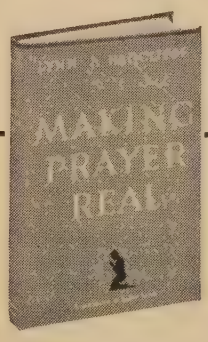
Contact with Power: HOW GOD ANSWERS PRAYERS — FOR THEIR SAKES

The Way of Spiritual Discipline: THE PILGRIMAGE FROM SELF TO GOD — TRANSFORMING OUR EVERYDAY PRAYERS—PRACTICING THE LIFE OF DEVOTION — CREATIVE MEDITATION — GOD-CENTERED PRAYER—LIFE-CHANGING SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

The Way of Illumination: THE ART OF COMMUNION WITH GOD—BESIDE STILL WATERS—THE SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE—LISTENING TO THE AGONY OF GOD

The Way of Oneness with God: THE HEIGHTS OF THE SPIRIT—THE FLAME OF LIVING LOVE

Publication Date: September 8



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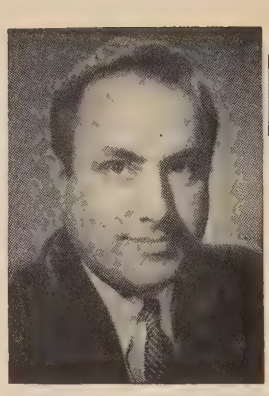

Ministry of Music

By Ernest K. Emurian

The Hymn Festival

EVERY church ought to have at least one hymn festival a year. By fitting the music to the abilities of the choir and the tastes of the congregation, such an event can become a high point in any church's program.

A theme for a fall or early winter festival could be "Hymns of all Churches." Featuring plenty of congregational singing, and interspersing choral selections with solos, duets and quartettes, this could be an educational as well as inspirational experience. Here is a typical program, including hymns from writers of many denominations:

Baptist. "America," "The Morning Light Is Breaking," "Softly Fades the Twilight Ray," by Samuel Francis Smith; "Blest Be the Tie," by John Fawcett; emphasizing the fact that our nation's noblest patriotic hymn and one of the church's finest hymns of Christian fellowship are contributions of this denomination.

Episcopalian (including the Church of England). "Holy, Holy, Holy," "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," "The Son of God Goes Forth to War," and others by famed Bishop Reginald Heber; Abide with Me," by Henry F. Lyte; and many outstanding poems by Isaac Watts or John Newton.

Quaker (Friends). "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind," "O Brother Man," and others by John Greenleaf Whittier.

Presbyterian. "O Love that Wilt Not Let Me Go," by George Matheson; "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus," by George Duffield; and "Rock of Ages," by rock-ribbed Calvinist Augustus Toplady.

Unitarian. "Nearer My God to Thee," by Sarah Flower Adams.

Roman Catholic. The hymns of any of the early saints or fathers, from 3rd-century Clement of Alexandria (whose "Shepherd of Tender Youth" is the earliest Christian hymn extant) to medieval Bernard of Clairvaux, in various English translations; "Faith of Our Fathers," by Faber, altered to suit Protestant tastes and theology; "Silent Night" by Austrian Father Mohr; "Lead, Kindly Light" (when Cardinal Newman penned that he was not wearing the red hat, but was torn between the Anglican and Roman communions, having definitely committed his heart and mind to neither).

Jewish. "The Lord Is My Shepherd" in any or all of its translations and versions, from James Montgomery's masterpiece to "He Leadeth Me," by Joseph Gilmore (another Baptist); or "The Spacious Firmament on High," Joseph Addison's metrical version of Ps. 19.

Methodist. "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," or any of the thousands by Charles Wesley, as well as any of the gospel songs from the prolific pen of Fanny Crosby ("Saved by Grace," "Safe in the Arms of Jesus," "Near the Cross").

Congregational Christian. Many hymns of the social awakening, such as "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee," by Washington Gladden; Ray Palmer's devotional gem, "My Faith Looks Up to Thee," as well as his translations, such as "Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts."

Lutheran. From the pen of the great poet-composer Martin Luther himself, come the stirring "A Mighty Fortress" and the sentimental "Away in a Manger."

George Bennard, author-composer of the number-one gospel song, "The Old Rugged Cross," was when last accounted for working faithfully and diligently with the **Salvation Army**, while **Plymouth Brethren** lay preacher Joseph Scriven is remembered only for "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

• *The Secret of Serenity*

FAITH has been the stay of Christ's followers down the centuries. In World War I, Cardinal Mercier of Belgium, by his stalwart resistance to oppression, became a rallying center for his people and an inspiration to the world. On the 50th anniversary of his ordination he told the secret of his serenity:

"Whether in the years of peace or the years of war, whether in poverty or prosperity, whether in failure or success, never have I failed to feel deep down in my heart a sense of tranquillity, confidence and peace. . . . I must tell you the secret of Christian serenity. It lies in giving yourself confidently to the goodness of the Lord."—*Frank A. Court, St. Paul Methodist, Lincoln, Neb.*

A Sermon Summary

Watch Out for Your Premises!

MORE than most men think, they need to beware of their axioms. They need to watch out for their theories, their reasonings, their premises.

They need, for example, to watch out for the premise that force is the only way to solve the problems of the world. Today that premise has its largest use in reference to Russia. We have tried everything else, the argument runs. So now we must use force.

But it will not work. It will not work because the axiom is false. Force never really settles anything. The real dilemmas of the world are not military. They are political, economic and social. These are the fields of battle on which communism really threatens us, and victory in war can find us beaten in the more important conflict. Force is always the evidence of weakness, the revelation of failure, the refuge of despair. "The beaten track of war . . . is always the track of beaten men." "You cannot bomb a religion out of the heart of a people nor bayonet a new one into them."

Watch out for your premises! Watch out for the premise that force is the only way to solve the problems of the world today. It isn't. It may provide its wielder with the right to attempt their solution, but by the time he gets around to solving them, he always finds them bigger than they were before he fought to have that right.

Beware also of the premise that God can be confined within the limits men impose upon him. Today that premise is used most frequently by the Roman Catholic Church, and a Protestant minister confronts it, for example, in mixed marriages. The stand which the Roman Catholic Church has taken is based upon a false premise—that the Roman church is the only true church.

That premise is demonstrably false. Jesus founded the church in the sense that he gathered to himself a group of men and women who believed in him and committed themselves to spread the word of him wherever opportunity was given them. But if Jesus ever conceived anything as complicated as the Roman Catholic Church, it is very, very strange that the whole matter is left to three verses in the Gospel according to Matthew. If Jesus ever believed that the difficult patterns of the Roman Catholic faith were the essential means of the soul's salvation, it is extremely odd that he did not impress that fact more clearly on the ones he chose to help and follow him. The lines from Bethlehem to our town are not the lines of ecclesiastical succession and papal authority but the lines of humble hearts and devoted minds, the lines of those who love the Lord and seek his guidance that they may faithfully serve his will. Those lines lead to members of Roman Catholic churches, but they also lead to members of Episcopal churches and Lutheran churches and Presbyterian churches and Congregational churches.

The army of false premises is probably as numerous as the stars. There is the false premise that self-preservation is the first law of life. There is the false premise that a man has to live. There is the false premise that we are put upon the earth to be happy, that all is fair in love and war, that some people are born to be rich and other people poor. Watch out for those premises! They have no place in Christian thought and practice.—*Roy M. Pearson, Hancock Congregational, Lexington, Mass.*

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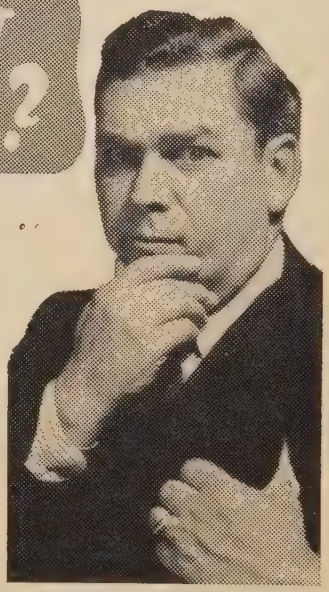

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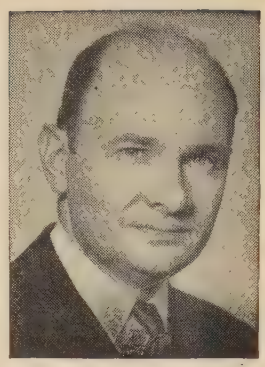

Come Let Us Worship

By Clarence Seidenspinner

Basic Prayer Forms

ONE of the great traditions of Protestant worship is the free pastoral prayer. The separatist and Puritan groups of the English reformation vigorously reacted against the use of printed prayers and the completely ritualistic approach to God. This reaction was shared by some of the Wesleyan societies of England during the 18th century revival. Here in the United States the tradition of the minister's free prayer became firmly entrenched in Protestant worship.

At its best, the pastoral prayer can be an amazing means of grace, with power to take the worshiper from the cares of the common life to heaven's gate itself, there to behold the very glory of God. At its worst, the pastoral prayer can be banal, insipid, sentimental, and strangely reminiscent of the stream of consciousness of a neurotic blubbering in a psychiatrist's office.

Minister's must come to see that even pastoral prayers tend to find expression through some well defined form or pattern. The utterly nondescript prayer is an unsatisfying prayer which sometimes has a tendency to sound like a case study. The minister must understand what definite prayer designs are available if he is going to bring strength and meaning and beauty to his free prayer, thus making it a means of grace for his people.

Not only must he understand that the design of the prayer is important; he should also realize that attention must be given to the language. To address God in the formal language of the service is not to adopt a breezy, happy-go-lucky kind of style or even a journalistic style. To address God in prayer during public worship is to use a language employed by men writing a literature of power.

I shall never forget the time I heard an invocation which sounded like this: "Lord Jesus, we're so glad that you are here with us tonight. We're a pretty weak outfit, but you can give us strength. We are all mottled with sin, but you can fix us up. In fact, Lord, what ciphers we would be if it was not for you."

Two faults are apparent in this prayer. In the first place, it is not an *invocation.* The man who used it missed his opportunity. He had been scheduled to give an invocation, which is a basic prayer form. An invocation is a definite invitation to Deity to send his Holy Spirit upon the group for their guidance. The second weakness of this prayer is its style. This is not the way to talk to God in the presence of a group of people. It may be all right in the privacy of one's own chamber, but not during a congregational service. The amenities call for a language of power and not the informal language of a club room.

There are several distinctive prayer forms that pastors need to keep in mind. The invocation is one. The *collect* is another. All too often the collect is confused with a short prayer. To be sure, it is a brief prayer, but one with a pattern as definite as the pattern of the sonnet.

A collect is composed of four parts and the conclusion: (1) the invocation, followed by (2) a clause referring to the devine nature; (3) a special petition, sometimes accompanied by a second petition definitely related to the first; (4) a statement of the purpose for which the petition is made; and (5) a formal conclusion.

Thus the second collect in the Book of Common Prayer can be analyzed as follows: (1) Blessed Lord, (2) who hast caused the Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; (3) grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy Holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, (5) which thou hast given us in our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

The collect lends itself very well to a brief petition to God because it is a form in which the petition may be given a complete setting. If the service is built around a particular theme, for example, the theme may be very well summarized in terms of prayer through a collect form. The pastor may also find this form very useful at the close of his service in order to gather up the basic theme of the sermon in terms of a corporate petition to God. This will be satisfying to the congregation and much more effective than a few loosely tied-together sentences, because there is a fine finish and sense of inevitability in the collect that a looser prayer does not have.

Next month we shall take up other prayer forms.

Preachers in Print

Prayer and Karl Barth

KARL BARTH's exposition of the Reformers' interpretation of the Lord's Prayer, seen through the lenses of his own world view and stated in his characteristic paradoxical language, is presented in his PRAYER ACCORDING TO THE CATECHISM OF THE REFORMATION (Westminster, $1.50). Adapted by *A. Roulin* from the stenographic records of three seminars and translated by *Sara F. Terrien*, it invites the English reader to acquaint himself with the devotional side of Barth's teaching.

According to this exposition, it is God himself who hallows his name, makes his Kingdom come, causes his will to be done, gives us our bread, and forgives us; and he does all this even before we pray. Why then should we pray? Because, says Barth, it is Jesus Christ who prays this prayer, and he invites us to pray it with him. We are to join in Christ's intercession because God commands us to pray in order to show our *reconnaissance*, our "thankfulness," and our allegiance to and concern with what he is doing. But in showing our concern we must not give ourselves "the role of indispensable collaborators," because "the coming of the Kingdom is totally independent of our powers." Consequently Barth prays that the church may be liberated "from all impetuous Americanism."

To illustrate his conception of the relation between the Kingdom of God and our life in this present world, Barth compares the Kingdom to a table concealed by the cloth of "our personal life and that of our family, the life of the churches, the political events." We know that the table is here, but before we can see it the cloth must be removed; this present "illegitimate dominion," incomprehensible and inexplicable, of the one whom the Scriptures call the devil must be abolished, and "Jesus Christ must become visible, even as he was visible at Easter."

The purpose of making this translation from Barth's lectures on prayer may be inferred from a statement on the jacket of the book: "This warmly devotional treatise will come as a surprise to those who have fostered the popular misconception that Barth has preached a God severely separated from man and unrelated to the events of common life. Indeed, Barth emphasizes prayer as a two-way relationship between man and God." But it may be questioned whether this "misconception," if it is a misconception, is really refuted here. For this exposition of the Lord's Prayer, couched in the language of paradox, with its own special meanings given to such terms as "collaboration" with God and our "participation" in his work, does not give us a satisfying answer to this life's ultimate question: Why has God put us into a world where the very best we can do, even by the help of his grace, is to conceal the table of his kingdom with the cloth of our own activity on the stage of history?

A bad sermon, says Barth, is the opposite of hallowing the name of God; and so it is. But this speaking in eschatological paradoxes is not conducive to clarity in sermonizing. We need to ask whether it is true that our human history is nothing but a tablecloth that conceals the Kingdom of God. This Kingdom, together with our prayer for its coming, is indeed the gift of God's grace, but it is God's grace in the form of man's task to work with him in creating and maintaining it. We may well question whether Barth's world view is adequate for preaching today.

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ROUNDUP

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No Star, depends on your taste and need.)

THE POWER OF FAITH. By **Louis Binstock.** Prentice Hall, $3.95. This book emphasizes the place of human faith in achieving mental and emotional maturity. Rabbi Binstock offers practical suggestions for attaining a greater degree of personal happiness in such areas as physical health, work, family life, social relationships, religion and immortality. It is primarily a volume for lay readers but clergymen will find many usable sermon illustrations. — *Alton M. Motter, Associate Editor, The Pulpit; Executive Director, Chicago Sunday Evening Club.*

★★CRUSADE: THE FIGHT FOR ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY. By **Roy F. Bergengren.** Exposition Press, New York, $3.75. This is the story of credit unions from 1921 to 1945, written by a man who was at the very center of their growth. A chatty, sometimes verbose and repetitive, account of the passage of the laws and the organization of the units which made usury a thing of the past for some millions of Americans, it touches almost every state in the Union and many of the great and near-great in its generation. The author was a crusader who saw in this one social reform the salvation of democracy. His sincerity and zeal are apparent on every page. — *Robert I. Kahn, Congregation Emanu El, Houston, Tex.*

HOW! Edited by **Betty Stewart.** Friendship Press, 50 cents. The subtitle is "Home Missions Works for Human Rights." This little book of 90 pages follows the format of NOW! —published last year. It is full of human-interest stories that illustrate the influence of home missions on the attainment of human rights by minority groups. Here home missions rises above the mere establishment of self-supporting churches. It discards the aim of building institutions in favor of building Christian personality in a Christian society. The book is packed full of quotable quotes.—*Amos John Traver, Hamma Divinity School, Springfield, Ohio.*

A TWENTIETH CENTURY APOCALYPSE. By **Bruce L. Kershner.** Exposition Press, New York, $2.00. An allegory in the biblical style, this book has clear relevancy to the cultural decay, economic contradictions and military madness of our times. Helpful to preachers in inspiring them to do creative styling. The method of paraphrase gives point to insights where mere intellectual analysis would fail.—*George Miles Gibson, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill.*

Books Preachers Are Reading

July	August	This Month	*An analysis based on reports from leading religious booksellers and from the reading of the Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.*
3	2	1	**A Protestant Manifesto.** *Winfred E. Garrison. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $2.75
4	3	2	**Guide to the Christian Faith.** *Wm. A. Spurrier. Scribner's,* $2.50
2	1	3	**Go Inquire of the Lord.** *Gerald Kennedy. Harper,* $1.50
7	7	4	**The Church Militant.** *Harold A. Bosley. Harper,* $2.00
	8	5	**Faith and Education.** *George A. Buttrick. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $2.00
	9	6	**Great Voices of the Reformation.** *Harry Emerson Fosdick. Random,* $5.00
1	4	7	**Questions People Ask.** *Robert J. McCracken. Harper,* $2.50
10	5	8	**Marching Off the Map** *Halford E. Luccock. Harper,* $2.50
	10	9	**The Irony of American History.** *Reinhold Niebuhr. Scribner's,* $3.50
	6	10	**A Catholic Speaks His Mind.** *Thomas Sugrue. Harper,* $1.00

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

IT IS ESTIMATED that 59 million people saw on television or heard on radio the proceedings of the two national political conventions in Chicago. The effect upon the public mind of this realistic visualization of the working of American democracy must have been disturbing and disillusionizing. People of even ordinary sensibilities must have reacted with disgust at the beefy oratory, the gushing sentimentalism, the synthetic, hysterical, dervish-like "demonstrations," the strategies, the "deals" and other machinations that could not be hidden from the observing and listening millions. For myself, I judge these repugnant features as others do, but without cynicism. They seem to me to be surface symptoms of something deeper and hardly less than tragic in a society dedicated to the democratic ideal. These conventions probably did the best they could, considering what the democratic process in American society has to work with. We rightly claim that our nation is "one and indivisible," but our society is many and sadly divided. The seams of its divisions were openly exposed in these party conventions. The predominant purpose of each party was to win the election by capturing the support of those colonial, racial, sectional and ecclesiastical groups whose votes, delivered, for the most part, wholesale, represent the difference between party victory and defeat. The special interests of these groups are irrelevant to the major issues our nation now faces. Looking at the conventions from this point of view, it seems remarkable that they came off as well as they did. The two nominees for the presidency are fine and able men. But, unfortunately, their party policies, trimmed to capture the votes of the special interest blocs, leave millions of voters in both parties, in effect, disfranchised. Each candidate assures his party that he will wage a "fighting campaign." At present it looks as if the fighting will be hardly more than shadow boxing.

American Democracy On Exhibition

The Book of the Month

RUFUS JONES SPEAKS TO OUR TIME, AN ANTHOLOGY, *edited by Harry Emerson Fosdick. Macmillan, $4.00.*

BEFORE opening this book, I had been, over a period of several weeks, reading a number of philosophical and theological volumes from which I hoped, not without some degree of success, to come to an understanding of the philosophy that now goes by the name of existentialism. Quite casually, I opened this book and began reading. "This sounds strangely like those other books," I said to myself, "and yet strangely unlike them." I began to read more carefully. I found that this was philosophy indeed, but not technical philosophy; it was philosophy in flower, abloom with life and beauty. The ideas and the language were so simple and so searching. Between the lines of his transparent simplicities I could see that everything Rufus Jones wrote was undergirded and held in control by a rigorous philosophic discipline, and that he was an existenialist before that word became current in modern thought. He was a philosopher who chose to walk and talk with us on the common human way about our yearnings, our hopes and doubts, our tragedies, our sin, our feeble faith, and our salvation in Christ, all in the simple speech which everyone can understand. He was a mystic, but his mysticism was purged of fantasy by his philosophy. Some day the existentialists will come up, I predict, from the depths of their philosophizing with the same simple message to the heart of man which Dr. Fosdick has enabled Rufus Jones to utter in the precious pages of this book.

A Thought for the Month

A SOCIAL GOSPEL which is not suffused and permeated with a sense of the eternal is no gospel at all. If the new order of social justice for which we of the modern spirit labor, and which it is the genius of essential Christianity to envisage, is only a development or an attainment within the narrow bounds of history and without significance beyond the finite banks of time, we who devote our energies to its realization will surely fall on disillusion. The idea that the reconstruction of the social order will be *per se* the Kingdom of God is a fallacy into which, alas, too many Christians have fallen. The solemn truth is that if we should awake tomorrow to find an order of society fashioned according to our present heart's desire, the Christian gospel would be not less but more needed than ever before. The attainment of our best social ideal would bring new temporal problems of its own which the idealist does not now envisage. The change in his environment would not change the nature of man. He would still be subject to temptation sinfully to grasp power for his own self-aggrandizement. And no temporal environment could quench the longing of the soul of man for the eternal. The need of the Christian faith will never be outgrown by social progress. We have here no continuing city. Our true citizenship must always be in heaven. The message of the living God, of the hope eternal never can be outmoded, and he makes himself poor indeed who trades it off for any other gospel.

Social Idealism and The Eternal Gospel

Charles Clayton Morrison

For the Record—

MINISTERS who have the future of American preaching at heart will be delighted to know that The Pulpit and the Chicago Sunday Evening Club are continuing their joint sponsorship of the Seminarian Preacher of the Year selection.

Our readers will be interested in the final decisions of the judges announced on pages 16 and 17, and in the selected 1952 sermon by McCormick Seminarian William Lorenz which begins on page 4.

Better Preaching

If today's preaching is to meet the spiritual hungers of our time, it is nearly a truism to say that the training for such preaching must begin in the seminaries. The Seminarian Preacher of the Year selection is an attempt to encourage more effective preaching by the young men of today who will occupy the pulpits of tomorrow.

The top seminarian sermons entered during these two annual selections would give any pastor food for serious thought. But before examining them, it would probably be a healthy experience to go back and read a sermon written during one's own seminary career. This editor followed that procedure. To say that it was a humiliating experience is to put it mildly. One felt like crying out, 'Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner!' How many preachers today were capable of producing sermons like Lorenz's "The Man by the Side of the Road" or James Will's "Men Who Live Differently" (July, 1951) during their seminary days?

Room for Improvement

In all fairness, however, it should be pointed out that the vast majority of the sermons entered in this homiletical project were not up to these high standards. We would be unfaithful to our editorial function if we did not say so. Too many sermons read either like lukewarm Sunday school talks or resembled typical term papers. Far too few were marked by the kind of conviction which moves the human mind and spirit. Nor did they reflect that tempo which Albert W. Palmer described as "making the sermon march."

All of this means that there is room for improving the sermonic productions of our seminaries. This is not an easy task in an age when the preacher faces a congregation constantly being conditioned by modern communications media. The encouraging fact is that many seminaries are alert to this deepened responsibility. They are using new training techniques and skills to undergird a revived sense of the sermon's place in the modern church program. May their tribe increase.

A.M.M.

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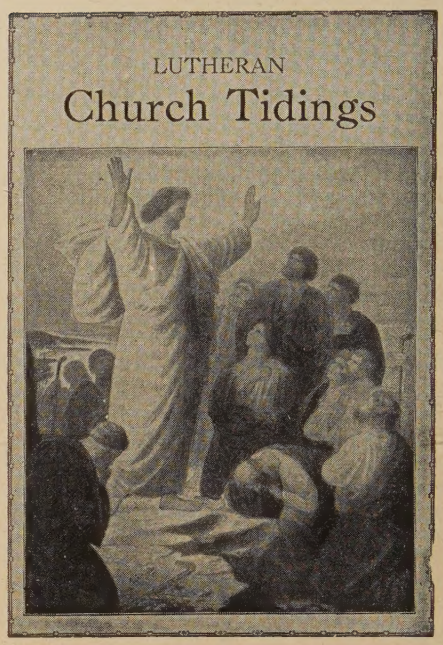

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